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ABSTRACT

This booklet is part of a series of units designed to help students take and defend a position on public issues. By looking at how decisions were made in the past, students can see that history did not have to happen just the way it did. By looking at how conflicts were resolved in other times and places, students can clarify their positions on how they ought to be resolved here and now. By 1775, the American colonists and the British could no longer find common answers to basic questions about government. The result was the American Revolution. This unit deals with the critical issues relating to those questions. They include: (1) What is a proper government and where does its power originate? (2) When should governmental authority be challenged? (3) In what ways should people, as groups or individuals, be able to express themselves to constituted authority? Is violence ever the "right" course? In this unit students face these problems as open ended questions. The historical portion of the booklet is divided into four sections. The first section summarizes the events leading up to the revolution, especially the Stamp Act. The second section examines the views that colonists held on the conflict. Both the patriot and loyalist views are explored. The third section offers accounts of the war from participants on both sides. The words of soldiers, poets, ministers, and revolutionaries are included. The fourth historical section discusses analogy cases. Events in Selma, Alabama in 1965 are compared to the events of the revolution. In the accompanying teacher's guide primary source documents and secondary sources are used to acquaint students with how these questions manifested themselves in the period leading up the the American Revolution. Special attention is given to the choice individuals faced, whether to remain loyal to a government that violated the values for which they believed it stood or to support violent protest against that government. Students and teachers can choose among several contemporary cases for analysis and comparison. Addressing the question of when authority should be challenged requires students to define authority. This definitional issue is emphasized throughout the unit. In examining whether violence is ever justified, students consider such criteria as the severity of the grievances being protested. Each section in the guide suggests activities and teaching methods. An 8-item bibliography and handouts are included. (DK)

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American Revolution

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Crisis of Law and Change

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Public Issues Series

AMERICAN REVOLUTION: CRISIS OF LAW AND CHANGE

Adapted from the Harvard Social Studies Project
by James R. Giese and Mary Elizabeth Glade
under the direction of
Donald W. Oliver and Fred M. Newmann

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What Is the Public Issues Series?

The Public Issues Series is a collection of units designed to help you take and defend a position on public issues. A public issue is a question involving a choice or decision over which there is disagreement. Public issues can be questions to be answered by all the citizens of a nation or community or by officials acting for them:

- Should school newspapers have the same right to freedom of the press as other newspapers?
- Should the United States provide aid to rebels in Communist nations in Latin America?

Public issues can also be phrased as choices for personal action:

- Should I write a letter to the principal to protest censorship?
- Should I write my congressperson to protest funding for rebels in Communist nations in Latin America?

You might ask why this public issues unit looks at an event from the past. By looking at how decisions were made in the past, we can see that history did not have to happen just the way it did. History is not simply a rushing stream of political, economic, and social events. The decisions people make shape history. In addition, many of the problems people face persist across time and place. By looking at how these conflicts were resolved in other times and places, we can clarify our positions on how they ought to be resolved here and now.

This unit, like others in the Public Issues Series, involves you as much more than a spectator to history. Instead, you will be a thinking, acting participant in the past, the present, and even the future.

What Are the Central Issues of This Unit?

In March 1775, Patrick Henry rose to speak before the Virginia Convention. Aroused by those who argued that the colonists in favor of organizing a militia to fight the British were traitors, Henry gave a fiery speech. Near the end, he summed up the issue with this question: "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains or slavery?"

Henry saw a conflict between the desire for a peaceful and secure life and the belief in liberty, which he thought was threatened by the British government's actions. Other people did not see the British actions in the same way. In 1775, the colonists and the British could no longer find common answers to basic questions about government. These questions – the critical issues of this unit – are:

- What is a proper government and where does its power originate?
- When should governmental authority be challenged?
- In what ways should people – as groups or individuals – be able to express themselves to constituted authority? Is violence ever the "right" course?

In this unit, you will face these problems as "open-ended" questions – questions that are still being debated today. You will deal with such questions as they were asked on the Green at Lexington in 1775; in Selma, Alabama, in 1965; and in many parts of our country today. You will be challenged to see and argue these questions with your classmates – for the issues of 1775 are still alive.

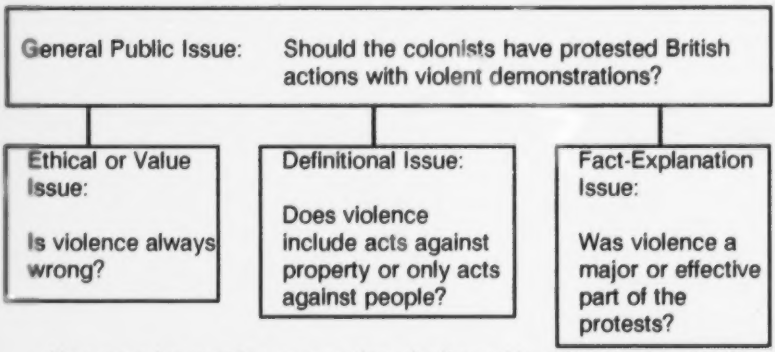
How Will We Approach the Issues in This Unit?

In this unit, you will take part in many discussions. Remember that not every discussion will resolve disagreements. It is often just as useful for people to learn to state their ideas with more precision and clarity and to discover precisely how their ideas differ from those of others.

No matter what the purpose of the discussion, it can become bogged down by smaller disagreements. Learning to identify the kinds of questions being raised can help keep the discussion moving. In discussing public issues, people generally look at three kinds of questions:

- Ethical or value questions. These questions deal with judgments about what should or ought to be done – judgments about rightness and wrongness.
- Questions of definition. These questions revolve around the meaning of important words or phrases, like *authority* or *mob action*.
- Questions involving facts and explanations. These questions focus on disagreements about the descriptions or explanations of events.

Examples of each kind of question are given in the diagram below.


General Public Issue: Should the colonists have protested British actions with violent demonstrations?
Ethical or Value Issue: Is violence always wrong?
Definitional Issue: Does violence include acts against property or only acts against people?
Fact-Explanation Issue: Was violence a major or effective part of the protests?

You may be starting to see that dealing with public issues involves thinking on several levels at the same time:

- Thinking about the controversial topic at hand.
- Thinking about the process of clarifying the topic by identifying the kinds of questions being raised and using strategies for dealing with them.
- Thinking about the feelings and relationships we develop toward others in the conversation and how we can deal constructively with these feelings.

Remember that the reason for discussing a public issue is not to "win" the argument but to understand more clearly your own views and the reasons that support them, as well as differing opinions.

Seeds of Revolution: A Summary of Events

The American Revolution occurred as a result of a long string of events. Together these events changed patterns of authority in the British empire. This section provides an overview of the seeds of the conflict to help you understand the broader issues covered in this unit.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The Acts of Trade and Navigation

The British Parliament enacted several laws to regulate trade within its empire. The acts were designed to put mercantilism into practice. Mercantilism was based on several ideas: (1) that empires should be self-sustaining wholes, (2) that colonies exist primarily for the benefit of the mother country, and (3) that as much trading as possible should take place within the empire. Almost from the beginning of the empire in the 17th century, British officials had been concerned about the need to increase royal authority over the colonists. Political conflicts in England and a series of wars with other imperial powers made strengthening royal authority in the colonies difficult, however. Still, Parliament *did* attempt to regulate the colonies in several ways:

The Navigation Act of 1651 required that all goods entering or leaving English colonies be in English ships (those registered in England, Ireland, and the American colonies) with English crews. This action helped shippers in both England and the colonies.

The Enumerated Commodities Act of 1660 said that only English merchants could ship and market colonial goods. Parliament prepared a special list of "enumerated" goods that could be shipped only to England or other English colonies. The list included items England would otherwise have had to purchase from other imperial powers—sugar, tobacco, cotton, indigo dye, ginger, and special wood products. As other commodities became valuable (molasses, copper, naval stores—pitch, tar, turpentine), they were added to the list.

The Staple Act of 1663 stated that European manufactured goods could not be shipped directly to the American colonies but first had to pass through England (and thus were taxed by customs duties). Then they were unloaded and reshipped to the colonies (thus producing profits for English merchants). Taxes and profits increased the prices colonists had to pay for these goods.

Imperial Administration to 1750

By 1700, the English empire had grown large and had worldwide importance. The ocean separating the colonies from England had allowed them to achieve considerable independence. While the colonies quarreled among themselves often, friction between the colonists and their mother country occurred only occasionally. At the same time, the colonists watched as Parliament assumed more and more powers.

Some British leaders thought the system was a disaster. By 1750, events began to indicate that these views were correct. Changes in British policy were needed. First, there were simply more British colonies (22 in the Western hemisphere by 1760). Second, colonial trade was growing more and more important. North American colonists, for example, were buying nearly 25 percent of all British exports. Third, outside threats to the empire were diminishing. Attention could finally be given to restructuring the imperial system.

French and Indian War (Seven Years War)

Many of the Acts of Trade and Navigation resulted from British competition with other imperial powers (Dutch, French, and Spanish). This competition also resulted in a series of wars that began in 1689. The wars fought between England and France were for mastery in Europe, as well as for worldwide commercial and imperial supremacy. The fourth of these, the French and Indian War, brought victory and world dominance to the British.

The French and Indian War had also opened British eyes to their North American colonists. British military officers and other officials were infuriated by the colonists' blatant trading with the enemy, by flagrant customs violations, by the difficulties of enforcing imperial regulations, and by the colonists' inefficiency and corruption. Many of the British went home determined to bring the colonials into line.

A New Colonial Policy

Although Britain won great prizes as a result of the French and Indian War, it was a costly victory. First, British officials faced a tremendous war debt – over 137 million pounds. Interest on the debt alone was over 5 million pounds a year, a huge sum compared to the country's normal peacetime budget of 8 million pounds.

Second, there was little prospect of paying off this debt. The new territory gained in the war made the traditional system of local defenses seem inadequate. The British commander in North America requested 15 regiments (10,000 troops, double the number of British troops in the colonies during the French and Indian War) to keep order among the French, the Indians, and the colonists. The cost of maintaining this standing army was nearly a quarter million pounds a year.

Third, English taxpayers resented paying these expenses. They felt their tax burden was already great. This feeling, along with tales of colonial prosperity brought back by returning soldiers, steeled British resolve to seek new sources of money in the colonies.

Starting in 1763, the British government adopted a new policy toward the colonies. This policy had three major goals: (1) to reassert British control over the colonies, (2) to restore colonial respect for British laws, and (3) to force the colonies to bear part of the cost of the French and Indian War and the expenses of colonial defense. To achieve these objectives, the British government took several steps.

The Navigation Acts were to be strictly enforced. The government (1) ordered the British navy to prevent illegal American trade with the French West Indies, (2) stopped the long-time practice of customs officials' leasing their offices to underpaid deputies, who often took bribes from smugglers (partly because they were friends and neighbors), (3) expanded the use of writs of assistance, general search warrants that allowed British officials to search private buildings and ships for smuggled goods, and (4) extended the jurisdiction of Vice-Admiralty Courts, in which there was no trial by jury.

The Proclamation of 1763 prohibited colonial settlement west of the Allegheny Mountains. It was designed to reduce the need for British soldiers on the frontier by keeping American settlers away from the Indians and French living in the area. The Proclamation irritated colonists who had speculated in western lands, hoping to make a profit. It also angered those who sought new homes in the west.

The Sugar Act (1764) attempted to raise revenues through import taxes on molasses. The Act actually decreased the tax rate on molasses, but the British planned to increase revenues by making certain that the *taxes were actually collected*. The colonists protested this law because it was a "revenue" rather than a "regulatory" measure.

The Currency Act (1764) forbade the use of paper money for payment of debts. Since gold and silver were always in short supply in the colonies, this action caused great hardship. It was nearly impossible for colonists to pay their debts.

The Stamp Act (1765) taxed legal documents, newspapers, pamphlets, playing cards, and virtually all other printed matter. Similar taxes levied in England since 1694 were annually raising almost 300,000 pounds. When colonists strenuously objected to this tax, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act. At the same time, it reasserted its *right* to tax the colonists in **The Declaratory Act (1766).**

The Quartering Act (1765) forced the colonists to house and supply the British Army. This move made the situation on the frontier more chaotic and increased colonists' fears about the intentions of the British government.

The Townshend Acts (1767) imposed taxes on such colonial imports as paper, glass, lead, and tea. The revenue raised by these taxes would pay the salaries of royal officials in the colonies. This would free the officials from colonial assemblies, which had formerly set and paid their salaries. Colonists saw this as a loss of control.

The Revenue Act (1767) created a Board of Customs Commissioners in Boston and new Vice Admiralty Courts in Boston, Charleston, and Philadelphia (one already existed in Halifax). These innovations were seen as very threatening to colonial autonomy because they were mechanisms for asserting royal authority.

Colonial Opposition

Britain's new policy met with immediate colonial resistance. Colonists continued to smuggle goods to evade customs duties. They denounced the use of writs of assistance by British officials. They convened a Stamp Act Congress in 1765, which denied the right of Parliament to levy taxes in the colonies. They demonstrated against royal officials, including the hated stamp collectors and royal governors. They refused to buy goods made in England, hoping to hurt financially English merchants, who, in turn, would put pressure on Parliament to change colonial policy.

The colonists also demonstrated against British soldiers. One such demonstration in 1770 resulted in the so-called Boston Massacre. British soldiers fired upon a hostile but unarmed crowd, killing five persons. The

colonists organized **Committees of Correspondence** in 1772. Under the leadership of Samuel Adams, the committees were to unify the efforts of the patriots in different colonies. Colonists took direct action against British authority by destroying property, as in the **Boston Tea Party** (1773). Parliament granted a monopoly on the tea trade to the British East India Company. A small import duty was to be paid by company agents who sold the tea in the colonies. In Boston a crowd of men, clumsily disguised as Indians, boarded some of the East India Company's tea ships and dumped the tea into Boston harbor.

The British React – The Intolerable Acts

The British replied to the destruction of the East India Company's tea in a series of punitive actions known as the "Intolerable Acts":

The Boston Port Bill closed the port until the East India Company received payment for the destroyed tea.

The Massachusetts Government Act took away the charter of 1691 and forbade the Boston town meeting to assemble without the governor's permission; the governor, an appointee of the king, was given more authority.

The First Continental Congress (1774)

The colonists' reply to the Intolerable Acts was the First Continental Congress, which assembled to consider united resistance to British authority. Joseph Galloway proposed a permanent colonial congress that would cooperate with Parliament in enacting laws for America. The Continental Congress rejected this plan, taking more radical action:

The Suffolk Resolves endorsed the action taken by Suffolk County, Massachusetts, which had declared the Intolerable Acts null and void. They furthermore advised training a militia to protect the colonies.

The Declaration of Rights and Grievances presented Britain a list of demands asking for a return to the situation of 1763.

The Association was formed to establish a boycott on all trade with Britain. After Congress adjourned, radical leaders created **Committees of Safety** throughout the colonies to enforce the Association agreements.

The Restraining Act (1775)

At first, the British offered a somewhat milder taxing policy. This conciliatory action was reversed by the **Restraining Act**, which was designed to destroy commerce in New England.

Lexington and Concord

The quarrel between Britain and Massachusetts patriots burst into armed conflict in April 1775 at Lexington and Concord. General Thomas Gage, the military governor, had tried to seize Sam Adams and John Hancock and to destroy the military supplies possessed by the radicals. Militia from New England states then moved to surround Gage's regiments in Boston.

The Second Continental Congress

The Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia in May 1775. Radical delegates took steps to raise and equip an army. They appointed George Washington commander in chief and issued a **Declaration of Causes for Taking Up Arms**.

Lee's Resolution and The Committee on Independence

On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia moved that "these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states." A committee was appointed to draft a Declaration. The Declaration, which was largely the work of Thomas Jefferson, was accepted on July 2. The final draft was adopted on July 4, 1776.

Participants in the events described above had no clear vision of what the outcome would be. People responded to events in accordance with their own beliefs, interests, and values. In the remainder of this unit, you will look more closely at individual and group decisions made in response to some of these events.

Persisting Questions of History

Classifying Issues. Classify the following statements as moral-value judgments, definitional claims, or fact-explanation claims. If you are not sure how a statement should be classified, tell why it might be classified in more than one category.

- The Stamp Act required colonists to pay a tax on virtually anything that was printed.
- Joseph Galloway's proposal to the First Continental Congress was a better plan than the actions taken by the Congress.
- Boycotting British goods was an ineffective way to protest British actions.
- The Boston Tea party was not a violent protest because no one was hurt.
- The British had no authority to tax the colonists because the colonists had not consented to such actions.
- The British caused the American Revolution by passing the Intolerable Acts.
- The colonists were wrong to break the law by smuggling goods in without paying duties.

Defining Authority. All of the central issues in this unit revolve around the concept of authority. The colonists claimed that Parliament did not have the authority to tax them. Do you agree or disagree? Why? Where does a government get its authority?

A Closer Look at the Stamp Act

A closer look at the Stamp Act crisis, which swept the American colonies in 1765, will help you better understand the conflicts between the British and the colonists. As you read the case study, pay close attention to the colonists' reactions to British decisions, which ranged from words, to pressures through legal and commercial channels, and finally to the wild rush of mob anger.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The British Position

Collecting taxes in the American colonies had never been easy for the British government. When Prime Minister George Grenville looked at the records of colonial customs receipts, he discovered that the British government actually spent more money trying to collect taxes than it received. Colonial tax receipts were so low, it was widely believed, because American merchants found many ways, including bribery and smuggling, to evade them. Grenville sought to increase colonial taxes by strengthening the tax collection machinery, by enforcing existing laws more effectively, and by introducing new tax-raising measures.

When Grenville introduced the Sugar Act (1761) in Parliament, he also announced that further taxes would be necessary. One idea he suggested was placing a stamp tax on all paper goods and documents circulating in the colonies. A stamp tax promised to raise enormous revenues, and it would be virtually self-executing. If documents—legal papers, books, magazines, even playing cards—did not bear a tax stamp, they would be void. Few tax collectors would be necessary. Since colonists sued each other frequently, citizens would be forced to use the stamps.

The public announcement of his intention to lay more taxes on the colonies may seem strange, but Grenville had a scheme in mind. Apparently he was somewhat worried about the reaction to a stamp tax in both Parliament and the colonies. As a consequence, he wanted to lay the groundwork for passing such a tax. When he introduced his resolution to Parliament, he stated that he "hoped that the power and sovereignty of Parliament over every part of the British dominions, for the purpose of raising or collecting any tax, would never be disputed." Grenville was certain that few members of Parliament would consciously try to diminish its power.

The Stamp Act passed Parliament amid great enthusiasm, partly because the members were not taxing themselves or those they represented. In the debate on the bill, one of the members declared:

> And now will these Americans, Children planted by our Care, nourished up by our Indulgence until they are grown to a Degree of Strength and Opulence, and protected by our Arms, will they grudge their mite to relieve us from the heavy weight of that burden which we lie under?

But not all members of Parliament gave the expected answer. Colonel Barre, a one-eyed veteran of the French and Indian War, replied:

> They nourished by your indulgence? They grow by your neglect of Them! As soon as you began to care about Them, that Care was Exercised in sending persons to rule over Them, in one Department and another – sent to Spy out their Liberty, to misrepresent their Actions, and to prey upon Them; men whose behaviour on many occasions has caused the Blood of those Sons of Liberty to recoil within them.
>
> They protected by your Arms? They have nobly taken up Arms in your defense, have Exerted a Valour amidst their constant and Laborious industry for the defense of a Country whose frontier, while drenched in blood, has yielded all its little Savings for your benefit.

Agents of the colonies in London presented petitions to Parliament against the tax. Parliament refused to hear them because it was not their custom to receive petitions on money bills. More important, these petitions called into question Parliament's authority to directly tax the colonies. Opposition of this sort appeared to be futile. The Stamp Act became law on March 22, 1765.

Questions for Conversation

1. Do you think Prime Minister Grenville's goal of collecting more taxes from the North American colonies was justified? Why or why not?

2. How do you feel about Americans being characterized as children indulged by the parent Britain? How might this kind of thinking affect the

British response to the colonists' petitions against the Stamp Act? Give reasons for your answer.

3. Is there room for rational discussion between the members of Parliament quoted on page 14? Are these debaters only interested in "scoring points"? Can you think of instances in class discussions when participants have only been "scoring points" rather than working toward mutual understanding or compromise?

The Colonists React

When news reached the colonies that the Stamp Act had passed, the colonists' anger erupted in a torrent of harsh words. Among the many who commented on the Stamp Act was a lawyer named Daniel Dulany, who wrote a series of pamphlets. As Dulany expressed it:

> The Colonies claim the Priviledge, which is common to all **British Subjects**, of being Taxed only with their own Consent, given by their Representatives, and all the Advocates of the **Stamp-Act** admit this Claim. Whether, therefore, . . . the Imposition of the **Stamp Duties** is a **proper** Exercise of Constitutional Authority, or not, depends upon the Single Question, Whether the Commons of **Great Britain** are **virtually** the Representatives of the Commons of **America** or not.

Were the American colonists represented in Parliament?

"Yes," said the usual British view, because the colonists had "virtual representation" like that of Englishmen living in England. As Thomas Whately argued in 1765, Parliament clearly had the authority to tax the colonies:

> ...for the Fact is, that the Inhabitants of the Colonies are represented in Parliament: they do not indeed chuse the Members of that Assembly; neither are Nine Tenths of the People of **Britain** Electors...none are actually, all are virtually represented in Parliament; for every Member of Parliament sits in the House, not as a Representative of his own Constituents, but as one of that august Assembly by which all the Commons [i.e., "common people of the empire"] of **Great Britain** are represented.

"No," said Dulany, because the colonists could not elect members to Parliament. To be "virtually represented" was in fact the same as being unrepresented. Americans, Dulany argued, were represented for purposes of taxation only in their colonial assemblies. Therefore only those assemblies, not Parliament, could tax American colonists.

Fear spread through the colonies that the Stamp Act marked the first step toward reducing Americans to slavery. If Parliament could tax the colonies without their consent, was there any limit to its powers and ambitions?

At first, most colonists doubted that the Stamp Act could be successfully resisted. However, the meeting of the colonial assembly of Virginia soon changed their minds.

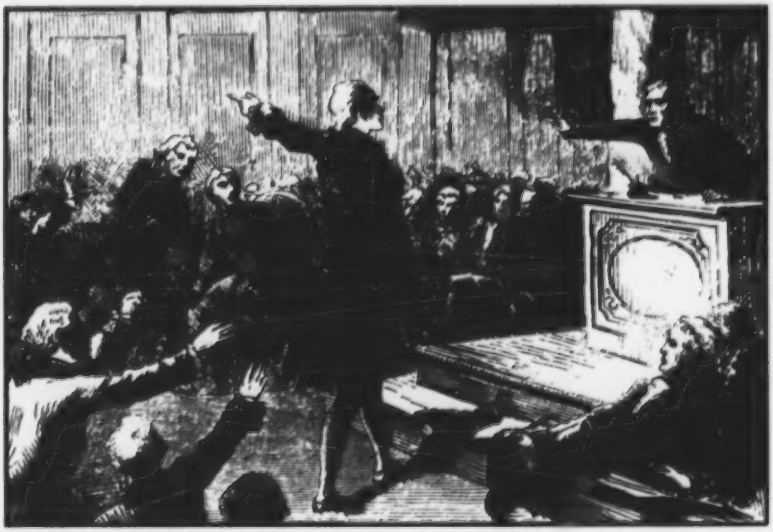
In Williamsburg, Virginia, in May 1765, the House of Burgesses was completing its routine business. Then news arrived from Virginia's London agent that the petition on which the assembly had labored the year before had not even received a hearing in Parliament. Stamp duties would be collected in America.

As their routine business was nearing completion, most of the Virginia Burgesses packed their bags, ready to escape the heat of Williamsburg. A few younger men in the assembly did not pack their bags. Now was their chance to win a political victory over the older members. They, not the departed authors of the petitions against the Stamp Act, would speak their minds in such terms that all America and Britain would hear them. On May 30, 1765, a lanky red-haired lawyer, who had joined the assembly only nine days before, rose to speak.

"In former times," declared Patrick Henry, "Caesar had his Brutus, Charles I had his Cromwell, and I do not doubt but that some good American will stand up in favour of his country."

At this point, the Speaker of the House interrupted to warn that Henry was uttering treason. Henry had to apologize and declare his loyalty to the King before he was permitted to go on. Henry then whipped out of his pocket a bundle of notes containing seven resolves he urged the House to adopt. The resolutions said:

1. Virginians possessed "all the liberties, priviledges, franchises, and immunities, that have at any time been held, enjoyed, and possessed, by the people of Great Britain."



2. These rights were guaranteed to Virginians by two royal charters "as if they had been abiding and born within the realm of England."

3. Taxes should only be enacted by the people or their chosen representatives, as "the only security against a burthensome taxation, and the distinguishing characteristick of British freedom....

4. Virginians had the "right of being governed by such laws, respecting their internal policy and taxation, as are derived from their own consent."

5. The General Assembly of Virginia had "the only and sole exclusive right and power to lay taxes and impositions upon the inhabitants of this colony"; all attempts to change this situation would "destroy British as well as American freedom."

6. Virginians were not bound "to yield obedience to any law or ordinance whatever, designed to impose any taxation whatsoever upon them, other than the laws and ordinances of the General Assembly."

7. That any person who argued otherwise should "be deemed an enemy to His Majesty's colony."

Henry read the first five resolutions. They were adopted by very slim votes. The last two resolutions seemed so drastic that they were voted down. The next day the burgesses reversed themselves on the fifth resolution as well. When colonial newspapers printed these resolves, however, they usually included seven as though all had been adopted.

Other colonies followed Virginia's lead. Rhode Island was the next to act. That colony adopted most of the Virginia resolves as its own. But they added a final one for good measure: "That all the officers of this colony...are hereby, directed to proceed in the execution of their respective offices in the same manner as usual." In other words, Rhode Island was instructing its officials to ignore the Stamp Act. James Otis, an attorney from Boston, and Benjamin Franklin, Philadelphia's leading citizen, called Rhode Island's action treasonous and rash. No other colony followed Rhode Island's radical lead, but seven other colonies eventually passed resolutions defining their rights.

The colonies did not stop with individual declarations of their rights. Almost at the same time that Patrick Henry was speaking in Williamsburg, James Otis was proposing that the colonies should protest the Stamp Act with a single voice. Otis advocated an intercolonial congress for the purpose. Sounding a rallying cry for the colonists, Otis stated, "Taxation without representation is tyranny." His idea led to the Stamp Act Congress, which met in Philadelphia in October. Nine colonies sent representatives.

After almost two weeks of arguing, scribbling, crossing out, and filling in, the delegates produced 12 declarations, which basically stated:

1. The American colonists, as British subjects, owed allegiance to the King and Parliament, but they also had "all the inherent rights and liberties" of British subjects.

2. "It is inseparably essential to the freedom of a people, and the undoubted right of Englishmen" to be taxed only by their own consent or the consent of their representatives.

3. That trial by jury and the right to petition the King and both houses of Parliament were inherent rights of British subjects.

Questions for Conversation

1. What constitutional issue did David Dulany identify? What reasons can you give for the importance of this issue? How does this issue relate to the definition of authority you discussed earlier?

2. What is the difference between virtual representation and representation? Are young people under the age of 18 in the United States protected by virtual representation? Explain.

3. Do you think it was important that the Stamp Act Congress included representatives from several colonies? Why or why not?

Actions Replace Words

But these declarations were only words. Several colonies began to add action to their words. In New York City, for example, a group of merchants met "to consider what was necessary to be done in the present Situation of Affairs, with respect to the Stamp Act, and the melancholy State of the North-American Commerce...." Nearly 200 merchants agreed not to import or sell British goods until the Stamp Act was repealed.

It is not clear how effective these boycotts were in influencing the eventual repeal of the Stamp Act. Many merchants in England were disturbed by the disruption in trade caused by the Stamp Act and the colonists' responses to it. Numerous petitions were sent to Parliament from British merchants.

As boycotts were being undertaken, other actions were also seen in the colonies. Mob actions had often been a part of political life in Great Britain and America. Every November 5, Protestants took to the streets to celebrate the failure of a Catholic conspiracy in 1605, often resulting in clashes between the two religious groups. Colonists moved into the streets for action on other occasions as well. Crowds sometimes functioned as semi-legal *posses*, closing houses of ill-repute, expelling diseased people, and enforcing community standards when local authorities failed to act. In addition, crowds had been mobilized to defend economic interests and had occasionally resisted British officials as well.

In Boston early in the summer of 1765, a group of men got together to prepare for November 1, the day the Stamp Act was to go into effect. They organized themselves as the Loyal Nine, and later as the Sons of Liberty.

In their search for ways to resist the Stamp Act, the Loyal Nine thought the colonial assemblies would be almost useless. They thus turned to other tactics. On August 14, the Boston crowd took to the streets. Their action was described by Francis Bernard, then Governor of Massachusetts:

> Yesterday Morning at break of day was discovered hanging upon a Tree in a Street of the Town an Effigy, with inscriptions, shewing that it was intended to represent Mr. Oliver, the Secretary, who had lately accepted the Office of Stamp Distributor. Some of the Neighbours offered to take it down, but they were given to know, that would not be permitted. Many Gentlemen, especially some of the Council, treated it as a boyish sport, that did not deserve the Notice of the Governor and [his] Council...
>
> Before the Council met, the Sheriff reported that his Officers had endeavoured to take down the Effigy: but could not do it without imminent danger of their lives...I desired their Advice, what I should do upon this Occasion...some said, that it was trifling Business, which, if let alone, would subside of itself, but, if taken notice of would become a serious Affair. Others said, that it was a serious Affair already; that it was a preconcerted Business, in which the greatest Part of the Town was engaged; that we had no force to oppose to it, and making an Opposition to it, without a power to support the Opposition, would only inflame the People...
>
> It now grew dark when the Mob, which had been gathering all the Afternoon, came down to the Town House, bringing the Effigy with them, and knowing we were sitting in the Council Chamber, they gave three Huzzas [cheers] by way of defiance, and passed on. From thence they went to a new Building, lately erected by Mr. Oliver...and pulled it down to the Ground in five minutes. From thence they went to Mr. Oliver's House; before which they beheaded the Effigy; and broke all the Windows next the Street; then they carried the Effigy to Fort hill near Mr. Oliver's House, where they burnt the Effigy in a bonfire made of the Timber they

had pulled down from the Building...they searched about for Mr. Oliver, declaring they would kill him...

I should have mentioned before, that I sent a written order to the Colonel of the Regiment of Militia, to beat an Alarm; he answered, that it would signify nothing, for as soon as the drum was heard, the drummer would be knocked down, and the drum broke; he added, that probably all the drummers of the Regiment were in the Mob.

Two weeks later, a similar mob action occurred in Boston. This time, the homes and belongings of two prominent citizens, including Thomas Hutchinson, the chief Justice of Massachusetts, were attacked.

Governor Bernard met the crisis by calling a meeting of the council. In the meeting the name of one of the leaders was revealed, and he was arrested. He was almost as quickly released, however, after rumors began to circulate that the customshouse would be torn down unless he went free. In the end, no one was ever punished for the destruction of Hutchinson's property. From this time on, however, the mob's organizers were careful to keep matters more firmly in control. As for Governor Bernard, he was spending his days in the safety of Castle William (a fort in Boston Harbor), a governor in name only. Who ruled? The question was crucial and undecided.

The economy and government of the colonies were at a near standstill. The port of Boston, for example, had been closed as soon as it became clear that colonial merchants would not purchase stamps for the papers they needed to unload their ships. The merchants became restless as their ships returned from voyages only to lie idle, their cargoes intact and collecting port charges rather than profits.

In Boston the courts were also closed. To a lawyer in Braintree named John Adams, the situation seemed gloomy. "I have not drawn a Writ since 1st Novr.," he wrote in his diary. "This long interval of Indolence and Idleness will make a large Chasm in my affairs if it should not reduce me to Distress and incapacitate me to answer the Demands upon me."

Was all his life's work to be made useless by the Stamp Act crisis? "So sudden an Interruption in my Career, is very unfortunate for me," Adams confided to his diary. Continuing:

> Thirty Years of my Life are passed in Preparation for Business. I have had Poverty to struggle with – Envy and Jealousy and Malice of Enemies to encounter – no Friends, or but few to assist me, so that I have groped in dark Obscurity, till of late, and had but just become known, and gained a small degree of Reputation, when this execrable Project was set on foot for my Ruin as well as that of America in General, and of Great Britain.

By chance, less than two days later, the gloomy lawyer and the despairing governor Bernard were given an opportunity to solve their personal dilemmas by mutual agreement. A messenger rode up to Adams' door with a letter saying that Adams, James Otis, and another lawyer named Samuel Gridley had been elected by Boston to plead before the governor and council for a reopening of the courts.

Adams the next day rode off to Boston. Adams presented his arguments to the governor and council. He began:

> Parliament of Great Britain can have no more right to tax the colonies than a Parliament of Paris... The Stamp Act was made when we are in no sense represented, therefore it is no more binding upon us than an act which should oblige us to destroy one half our species... Magna Carta says, We deny no man justice,

> we delay no man justice. Is not the closing of the courts both denial and delay? To use the stamps is impossible – and the law forces no one to that which is "impossible or vain."

The next morning Adams, Otis, and Gridley waited for the governor's final answer. It came at noon. He had no authority, Bernard said flatly, to open the courts "in the manner prayed for" – that is, without using the stamps. He suggested that the towns direct their petition to the judges at the court's next session.

That meant yet more waiting – and patience was becoming scarce in Boston. If the governor would not act, then the Sons of Liberty would. They had secured stamp distributor Andrew Oliver's promise not to turn the stamps over to the royal officials. But the Sons of Liberty were not going to trust him very long. Oliver was being pressured by the governor and some merchants to begin using the stamps. Wanting to prevent this, the Sons of Liberty asked that Oliver publicly resign under the Liberty Tree.

Oliver realized that he had no way out. Effigies were already prepared as a signal for a riot in case he failed to appear at the Liberty Tree. Attempting to save a little dignity, Oliver offered to resign at the court house. The Sons of Liberty would not accept this compromise. At 12 o'clock, Oliver marched through the streets amid a beating rain. He read his resignation from an upper window of the house beside the Liberty Tree. When he finished, the crowd of nearly 2,000 gave three huzzas and then departed.

Where Boston took the lead, other colonies followed. Groups calling themselves the Sons of Liberty sprang up, ready to take action. The Sons of Liberty in each colony established contact with the Sons of Liberty in other colonies. For example, a mutual aid agreement was struck between the New York and Connecticut Sons of Liberty on Christmas Day, 1765. For the next three months, letters were sent back and forth, their organization was perfected, and boycotts against any colony submitting to the Act were planned. The colonists seemed prepared to fight even the British Army to maintain their traditional constitutional rights.

Questions for Conversation

1. How difficult do you think economic boycotts are to implement? How effective are they? Find out about the Montgomery bus boycott in

the 1950s, the grape boycott in the 1970s, or the boycott against manufacturers of baby formula in the 1980s. Can you account for the success or failure of these boycotts?

2. What value did John Adams reflect in writing in his diary? What values did he talk about before the governor? What conclusions could you draw about values that influence personal and public decisions?

3. If you had been a colonist in 1765, would you have been satisfied that the arguments against the Stamp Act had been fairly represented through legitimate channels of government? Explain why you might have been satisfied or frustrated with the process.

The Stamp Act Is Repealed

The need to fight never came. Prime Minister Grenville fell from power, replaced by a weaker person who was willing to listen to pleas for repeal of the Act. English merchants, beginning to feel the pinch as colonial ports remained closed, threw their weight behind repeal.

Although Thomas Hutchinson did not know of the impending repeal of the Stamp Act, he wrote to a friend in England:

> If the act should be repealed, we shall still be in a deplorable condition. In the capital towns of several colonies and of this in particular, the authority is in the populace, no law can be carried into execution against their mind...I should hope the people in general would return to reason and be convinced of the necessity of the authority of government...

For Hutchinson, a dangerous precedent was being set. Although the pressure brought by various means led to the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1766, Parliament's principles had to be preserved in some way. The answer was to repeal the Stamp Act without giving up Parliament's claim to the right to tax the colonies. Parliament therefore passed the Declaratory Act. By this act it claimed authority over the colonies in "all cases whatsoever" and declared that they always had been and "are and ought to be" subject to the British Crown and Parliament.

Most Americans were too busy celebrating the repeal to pay much heed to the Declaratory Act. Yet neither of these actions settled the dispute. They merely put matters back where they had been in 1764. The situation needed only another English minister like Grenville, blithely ig-

noring the danger signals, to plunge Great Britain into a quarrel with the colonies from which it would be difficult to retreat.

Persisting Questions of History

Defining Mob. What is the difference between mob action and a peaceful demonstration? Does mob action have to include violence? Does the number of people in the streets make a critical difference?

Judging Methods of Protest. One of the critical issues of this unit is *how* people should be able to express themselves to constituted authority. The American colonies' uproarious response to the Stamp Act involved many methods of protest. Among them were:

- hanging effigies
- destroying private property
- parading in orderly demonstrations
- petitioning the government
- writing sets of resolutions
- boycotting products
- intimidating government officials
- writing articles against the government
- physically attacking government officials

Choose five of these methods and indicate how they appeared in the Stamp Act protest. Then indicate those you think were effective in accomplishing what they were intended to do. Finally, indicate those you think easiest to justify as "right" under the circumstances of 1765.

Defining Authority. Reread the excerpt from Thomas Hutchinson's letter to a friend in England. Do you agree that the authority was "in the populace"? Why or why not? What would be the consequences of a government without authority?

The Case of George Watkins (1773)

This reading illustrates a dilemma faced by many colonists. As violence and calls for protest increased, citizens such as George Watkins had to decide: Would they join the dissent or would they continue to support and obey the government?

Such decisions reveal much about beliefs citizens hold about government. As you read the following account, think about the values that may cause Watkins to join in dissent or continue to obey and support the government.

* * * * * * * * * * *

George Watkins was not smiling as he strode through the door of the White Horse Inn near Boston harbor. He was worrying about what had been going on in the colonies. Only a few months earlier, Boston's "Indians" had held their "Tea Party" nearby. He wondered how the radicals could feel they had a right to destroy private property.

One look at George Watkins told you a lot about the man. He was tall, erect, and broad-shouldered. He wore carefully tailored trousers and a waistcoat. His shoes were slightly worn, but carefully polished. Here was a man who had known wealth.

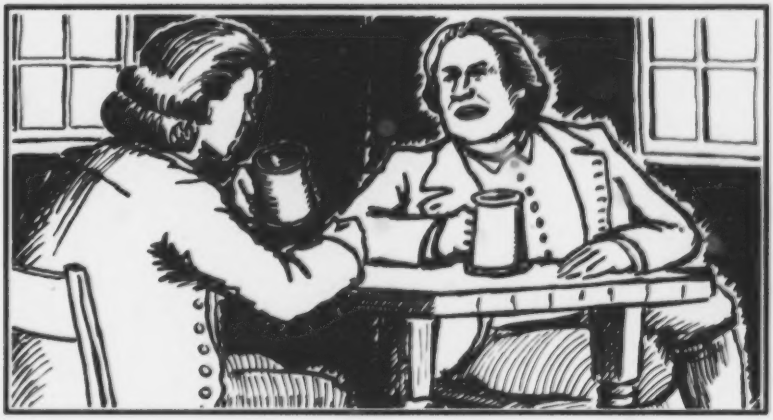
George took a table in the room reserved for the more prosperous, well-educated people. He ordered a mug of ale from the barmaid.

"And the British," he thought to himself, "do *they* respect private property?" He was bitter about the British. Ten years before, George had put almost all his money into land west of the Allegheny Mountains. He had expected to sell the land at a good profit. Then the British announced the Proclamation of 1763, forbidding settlement west of the Alleghenies. George could not sell his land.

A Visit with Dr. Johnson

As Watkins sat in deep thought, Dr. Soame Johnson came to his table. Watkins and Johnson had been friends for many years. Lately they had been arguing over British treatment of the colonies.

This case is fictional but authentically represents conditions of the time.



"I've been thinking, Soame," said Watkins, "our people in England just don't seem to understand our problems. I'm not sure they want to understand them. I wonder if this Sam Adams might not have something when he speaks up about independence."

Dr. Johnson looked startled. "King George needs a lesson in how to run his colonies, I agree. But I certainly cannot go along with fire-breathers like Hancock and Adams. We should do what we must, calmly and legally."

"But England doesn't even seem to want to meet us halfway," said Watkins. "And fellows like Adams and Hancock are in this thing so deep now, they've either got to have a fight or lose their shirts."

Dr. Johnson's voice rose: "We both know Hancock is a convicted smuggler who'll cut his country's throat just to save himself from jail! If this fuss ends, John will have to pay 100,000 pounds to England for the smuggling he's done. Do we want a war just so a man can get away with breaking the law?"

"Hancock was only forced to smuggle because England was worrying more about herself than about us," said Watkins. "Hancock is too good a businessman to foot the bill for England's trouble."

Johnson's face flushed. "George, are you defending a common criminal? Hancock was found guilty and fined. You don't deny that?"

"No."

"If you're willing to defend a criminal, why not defend Sam Adams, too? Adams wants to fight England because he hates kings and noblemen. Look at the kind of man he is. He was at the bottom of his class at Harvard. His father was poor. He can't make money or keep it so he argues that everyone who can must be dishonest. He was made tax collector of Boston and lost his job because he was behind in his accounts. Now he hates the government that ousted him. Sam Adams is powerful in the colonies because he tells the dissatisfied, the lazy, the idle that they're the only honest people. If men like Adams start running the show, there won't be a decent businessman or doctor or lawyer or any man of property left at all in America. And the country will be governed by riff-raff."

Dr. Johnson puffed with the effort of his speech.

Watkins replied very slowly. "You know, Soame, I agree with much of what you say. But are you sure you're painting the whole picture? The English have not governed us very well. And I am not sure that they *can* govern well. Just yesterday I received a letter from my friend Joshua Tuttle, who is in England right now. He is convinced that the English government is corrupt. Enormous salaries, pensions, bribes, quarrels, padded accounts, illegal contracts – all using up the tax money. Maybe England is more of a stone around our necks than a protector of our rights."

Johnson rose to his feet, leaned forward, and pounded on the table.

"Open your eyes! Do you know what Sam Adams and his gutter crowd are doing? They have mobbed and beaten ministers, lawyers, and doctors who have done nothing more than express their opinions. Those rebels say they are fighting for freedom. Yet they do not permit anyone the freedom to disagree with them.

"And what are you going to do, Watkins? Join those guttersnipes and rabble-rousers? I say, let's stand up for our rights and be counted – as good Englishmen – to protect our rights to property and liberty under English law."

Johnson got up and stamped out of the room. Moments later, Watkins heard loud voices coming from the barroom, where the common people drank and talked. He caught several words, "smuggling...Stamp

Act...stupid Englishmen." Watkins arose and walked over to the doorway. A tall, dark sailor was speaking in loud tones. And Dr. Johnson stood bristling at the sailor's words.

"So what are these laws supposed to so, these Trade and Navigation Acts? They're supposed to strangle our trade and make us servants of our royal master, His Majesty George the Third. Has George ever been to America? Has he ever worked aboard a trading ship? He calls it smuggling when honest merchants and self-respecting sailors try to make a living. I say it's not American smuggling that's the cause of this trouble, it's English tyranny."

Dr. Johnson snorted back at him. "I don't care what's at the heart of this trouble, but smuggling is law-breaking, and that's not good no matter who does it. You seamen and your masters have taken the law into your own hands too long. Right now the English laws are our laws, and most of us are Englishmen. If you'll break the laws of your government when that government is England, who's to say you'll obey them if we set up a government of our own? Or would you rather have *no* government, so you won't have to pay *any* taxes or obey *any* laws?"

The tall sailor banged his glass on the bar, straightened up to full height, and glared down at Johnson: "The difference is, my fine fat fellow, that American shippers are willing to pay American taxes to pay for things that help America. But American shippers ain't goin' to stuff the bellies of a bunch of English lords."

Johnson's face reddened. He stormed for the door.

The sailor shouted after him, "Why don't you go back to your king, then, and kiss his boots and pay him tribute? Because that's the law. I say law is what men say is fair and just and right for all the people, not what some king dreams up three thousand miles away."

The little crowd at the bar shouted approval. But several men who had kept silent throughout the argument quickly left the inn.

Watkins turned from the doorway and returned to his table. He was puzzled and worried. He knew the need for a fair and reasonable, government in this new world—a government that understood the temper and desires of a new brand of freedom. But he wondered how such a government could be born out of the contempt for law displayed by men like the sailor.

Was Sam Adams like this tipsy sailor? He had to find out. The next time Sam Adams spoke, he would go to listen.

Meeting at Lincoln

George Watkins tasted the crisp fall evening air as he rode to Lincoln. He felt a tingle of excitement. Tonight he would finally see and hear Sam Adams.

When he dismounted from his horse, he could see that there was already a crowd in front of the meetinghouse. Rawboned farmers had come from all corners of Lincoln, Concord, Lexington, and adjoining towns to hear the great Sam Adams.

The babble suddenly quieted. Watkins looked back down the dirt road as he hitched his horse. He knew it must be Sam Adams coming.

Adams climbed down from his horse, tied it, and threaded his way through the groups of men in front of the meetinghouse. He mounted the steps, turned, and raised his hands. Dead silence fell over the crowd.

"Friends and fellow countrymen," he began. "We have been subjected to greater tyranny and injustice than any people has ever endured. The crops we have raised with much sweat and toil are taxed without our consent. Our ships can no longer trade. The rights and privileges which we have always had are denied us. Our people are murdered by the King's soldiers...."

As Adams continued speaking, denouncing the king and demanding "the rights of free men," excitement swept over the crowd. George Wat-

kins felt the excitement despite himself. Yet, as the farmers shouted and cheered and drew closer to the speaker, Watkins and others drew back toward the outskirts of the crowd.

Suddenly, a voice rose against Adams. The crowd stirred angrily. But Adams carefully stopped. "No, my fellow countrymen," he said softly, "Let this *gentleman* speak."

The dissident turned out to be James Cartwright, a widely known Lincoln minister. He mounted the meetinghouse steps and shouted, "My fellow Englishmen, my fellow townsmen, this man Adams who stands before you and seizes your reason, as if by witchcraft, is a godless traitor. Worthy people of high character have warned me against him. He is preaching treason. Friends, have you forgotten that without England our fathers could never have settled this land? You shout against British soldiers but your memories are short. Ten years ago you cheered these same soldiers when they saved your wives and children from bloodthirsty Indians. You speak against the laws of England. But if it were not for England, we would all be slaves of an irresponsible French King. May God protect our beloved England."

The crowd had been confused. Then a murmur of protest grew into a roar. Cartwright's words were drowned in a sea of angry voices.

Sam Adams' clear, slow voice cut through the tumult. "Here is a defender of tyranny, an enemy of the Sons of Liberty right in our midst. Need I speak more of the dangers that stalk our homes and firesides!"

The crowd jostled Cartwright and spit on him as he went down the steps. Someone pushed him to the ground. He scrambled to his feet and dashed blindly into a tree on the outskirts of the crowd. The crowd laughed. A voice shouted, "Let's get him, boys. Let's show him what happens to king-lovers." The crowd began to move after him.

George Watkins suddenly found his voice in the confusion. "No," Watkins shouted as loud as he could. "Let him go. Let's hear Sam Adams out. He has something more important to say."

The crowd began to turn back toward the meetinghouse steps. Sam Adams went on.

What, Watkins wondered to himself, had possessed him to enter the brawl? Had he really wanted to save the deacon? Or was he really inter-

ested in more of what Adams had to say? If war came with England, would he be running with Cartwright, or fighting beside Adams?

Persisting Questions of History: Who Should Govern?

George Watkins, central figure of the case you have just read, is caught in a conflict of **values** about government. Many different values about what constitutes a proper government – one of the central issues of this unit – can be expressed.

Checking Your Values. On the next page are ten value statements about government. Put a checkmark (√) in the column to the left of those statements that represent the values *you* hold about "good" government. Compare the set of values you have checked with those checked by your fellow students. Are your values alike or different?

Classifying Values. Each of the statements can be classified as a different value. In column A on the next page, mark each statement with the letter of the one classification you think fits it best:

A. Competence, "know-how"
B. Tradition, familiar customs
C. Religion, belief in a Supreme Being
D. Law, the rules of the society
E. Separated power
F. Strength
G. Property ownership
H. Impartiality
I. Majority rule
J. Efficiency

Recognizing Values of Others. In the previous case study, George Watkins, Dr. Soame Johnson, and Samuel Adams seem to hold different values. Review the case. Then, in column B on the next page, mark the initials of each man next to the value statements you think he supports. Between which two men do the strongest differences exist? You may observe that Watkins is in a *dilemma* because he holds values that conflict with one another.

Discussing Your Choice. If you were George Watkins, would you have remained loyal or joined the rebels? Working with a group of classmates, set an agenda for discussing this question. One issue you should consider is whether the patriots used peaceful means of protest sufficiently. As you discuss the issue, be sure to stop periodically to summarize the trend and ask "Where has the discussion come, and where is it going?"

(√)		A	B
	1. It would be wrong to change the system of government we have inherited. It has the benefits of long experience.		
	2. A leader is not finally responsible to the people, but only to God, from whom he/she receives authority.		
	3. Fair decisions can be made only by impartial leaders who have no special interest whatsoever at stake. Only these people should govern.		
	4. Leaders should not bow to the prejudiced interests of the people, but should be guided by a sense of law. Legal rights and the general welfare should be their only guidelines.		
	5. Each person should have a say in determining her/his own fate. Thus, the government should be run by representatives chosen by a majority of the people.		
	6. A country belongs to those people who own property in it, and they should govern.		
	7. Power should be separated and divided among several ruling groups. Centralized power often brings tragic mistakes.		
	8. The power to govern should be given to the most capable people, to those who have demonstrated intelligence and skill. The average person does not have enough skill to govern.		
	9. Life is naturally a struggle. Those strong enough to seize power earn the right to govern.		
	10. Time, money, and effort are saved when a small, unified group runs the government. It is inefficient and wasteful to split power among groups who will bicker and delay decisions.		

Views on the Conflict

Like George Watkins, other residents of the colonies faced a choice: whether to side with the patriots, the loyalists, or remain undecided. Even after war began, arguments among Americans continued. Values about government affected many decisions, but so did personal situations – how people made a living, the amount of freedom they had, what religion they practiced, and where they lived. Both sides tried to convince others to join them – sometimes with reasoned arguments, but sometimes by force (patriots tarred and feathered some loyalists) or bribery (the British offered slaves their freedom if they would fight with the British Army).

Below are several descriptions of different views on the conflict. As you read them, try to identify the most important reason each person had for his or her decision.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Phillis Wheatley

Phillis Wheatley was a black poet. She had been brought to the colonies as a slave but was freed as a young woman. This poem was written in 1773.

No more America in mournful strain
Of Wrongs, and grievance unredress'd complain,
No longer shall thou dread the iron chain,
Which wanton Tyranny with lawless hand has made,
And which it meant to enslave the land.

Should you, my lord, while you pursue my song,
Wonder from when my love of Freedom sprung,
Whence flow these wishes for the common good,

Adapted from Phillis Wheatley, Poems on Various Subjects, (1773). Available from AMS Press.

By feeling hearts along best understood,
I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate
Was snatched from Afric's fancied happy seat:
What pangs excruciating must molest,
What sorrows labour in my parent's breast?
Steeled was the soul and by no misery moved
That from a father seized his babe beloved.

Such, such my case. And can I then but pray
Others may never feel tryrannic sway?

Questions for Conversation

1. Did Phillis Wheatley side with the patriots, remain undecided, or side with the loyalists?

2. What was the reason for her decision?

Reverend Samuel Seabury

Reverend Seabury, a minister and farmer from New York, wrote the following letter to Alexander Hamilton arguing the cause of Great Britain.

December 24, 1774

In answer to Alexander Hamilton.

...Did you think, Sir, that Great Britain is like an old, wrinkled, withered, worn-out hag, whom every jackanapes that truants along the streets may insult with impunity? You will find her a vigorous matron, just approaching a green old age, and with spirit and strength sufficient to chastise her undutiful and rebellious children. Your measures have as yet produced none of the effects you looked for: Great Britain is not as yet intimidated; she has already a considerable fleet and army in America; more ships and troops are expected in the spring; every appearance indicates a design in her to support her claim with vigour. You may call it *infatuation, madness, frantic extravagance*, to hazard so small a number of troops as she can spare against the thousands of New England. Should the dreadful contest once begin – But God forbid! Save, heavenly Father! O save my country from perdition!

Adapted from Samuel Seabury, Letters of a Westchester Farmer (1775)

Consider, Sir, is it right to risk the valuable blessings of property, liberty and life, to the single chance of war? Of the worst kind of war – a civil war? a civil war founded on rebellion? Without ever attempting the peaceable mode of accommodation? Without ever asking a redress of our complaints from the only power on earth who can redress them? When disputes happen between nations independent of each other, they first attempt to settle them by their ambassadors; they seldom run hastily to war till they have tried what can be done by treaty and mediation. I would make many more concessions to a parent than were justly due to him, rather than engage with him in a duel. But we are rushing into a war with our parent state without offering the dear concession; without even deigning to propose an accommodation. You, Sir, have employed your pen, and exerted your abuses, in vindicating and recommending measures which you know must, if persisted in, have a direct tendency to produce and accelerate this dreadful event. The congress also foresaw the horrid tragedy that must be acted in America, should their measures be generally adopted; why else did they advise us "to extend our views to *mournful* events," and be in *all* "respects prepared for *every* contingency?"

May God forgive *them*, but may he confound *their* devices: and may he give *you* repentance and a better mind!

Questions for Conversation

1. Was Seabury a patriot, a loyalist, or undecided?

2. What reasons did he have for his position?

Abigail Adams

Abigail Adams wrote the following letter to her husband, John, on March 31, 1776.

– I long to hear that you have declared an independancy – and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose will be necessary for you to make I desire you would remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such

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Excerpted from Lyman H. Butterfield et al., The Book of Abigail and John: Selected Letters of the Adams Family (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975). Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could. If perticuliar care and attention is not paid to the Laidies we are determined to forment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice, or Representation.

That your Sex are naturally Tyrannical is a Truth so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute, but such of you as wish to be happy willingly give up the harsh title of Master for the more tender and endearing one of Friend. Why then, not put it out of the power of the vicious and the Lawless to use us with cruelty and indignity with impunity. Men of Sense in all Ages abhor those customs which treat us only as the vassals of your Sex. Regard us then as Beings placed by providence under your protection and in immitation of the Supreem Being make use of that power only for your happiness.

Adams wrote the letter below to Mercy Otis Warren, a patriot friend, after receiving her husband's reply to the first letter.

He is very sausy to me in return for a List of Female Grievances which I transmitted to him. I think I will get you to join me in a petition to Congress. I thought it was very probable our wise Statesmen would erect a New Government and form a new code of Laws. I ventured to speak a word in behalf of our Sex, who are rather hardly dealt with by the Laws of England which gives such unlimitted power to the Husband to use his wife ill.

I requested that our Legislators would consider our case and as all Men of Delicacy and Sentiment are averse to Exercising the power they possess, yet as there is a natural propensity in Humane Nature to dommination, I thought the most generous plan was to put it out of the power of the Arbitrary and tyranick to injure us with impunity by Establishing some Laws in our favour upon just and Liberal principals.

I believe I even threatned fomenting a Rebellion in case we were not considerd, and assured him we would not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we had neither a voice, nor representation.

In return he tells me he cannot but Laugh at My Extrodonary Code of Laws. That he had heard their Struggle had loosned the bands of Government, that children and apprentices were dissabedient, that schools and Colledges were grown turbulant, that Indians slighted their Guardians, and Negroes grew insolvent to their Masters. But my Letter

was the first intimation that another Tribe more numerous and powerfull than all the rest were grown discontented. This is rather too coarse a complement, he adds, but that I am so sausy he wont blot it out.

So I have help'd the Sex abundantly, but I will tell him I have only been making trial, of the Disintresstedness of his Virtue, and when weigh'd in the balance have found it wanting.

It would be bad policy to grant us greater power say they since under all the disadvantages we Labour we have the assendancy of their Hearts.

And charm by accepting, by submitting sway.

Questions for Conversation

1. Was Adams a patriot, a loyalist, or undecided?

2. What argument did she make concerning the rights of women? What do these arguments have to do with the Revolution?

Blacks in Massachusetts

On January 13, 1777, a group of blacks in Massachusetts sent a petition to the state House of Representatives. Here in modern language, is what the petition said.

We believe that we have in common with all other men a natural and inalienable right to freedom. We have never given up this freedom by any agreement, but were dragged from friends and parents, from a pleasant country, in violation of the laws of nature and of nations. We were brought here to be sold like beasts and condemned to slavery for life. Not only do the people who treated us so badly claim to be Christians, but they cry out against the efforts of the British to enslave them! The honorable members of the legislature must understand that a life of slavery, with no privileges and none of the things that make life tolerable, is far worse than not existing at all.

Adapted from Herbert Apetheker, ed., A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States (Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1962), published by arrangement with Lyle Stuart.

Like the good people of these states, who have written many petitions to the British, we have written many petitions to the legislature of the state. We are sad to say that we have achieved no success. Yet every principle on which America has acted in the course of its difficulties with Britain argues a thousand times more strongly in favor of the slaves. We therefore beseech you to consider this petition seriously and to pass a law restoring the natural rights of all men and saying that children born in this Land of Liberty may not be held as slaves after they reach the age of 21. Such a law would eliminate the inconsistency of arguing for freedom from England while enslaving others.

Questions for Conversation

1. Do you think the writers of this petition were patriots, loyalists, or undecided?

2. What argument did the writers make regarding slavery? What do these arguments have to do with the Revolution?

Persisting Questions of History

Defining Patriot and Loyalist. The terms *patriot* and *loyalist* are used to label two groups of colonists during the Revolutionary War period. But what do these terms mean? Is one who resists governmental action a patriot? In discussing the U.S. Civil War, historians call the Southerners rebels. Would it be appropriate to call the colonists who were for independence – breaking away from the central government – rebels and to call those who were for staying with England patriots? Why or why not?

Examining Reasons. Why weren't Abigail Adams' arguments for women's rights taken seriously in 1773? Do the same reasons apply to why the black petitioners' arguments for ending slavery were ignored? Does the fact that many women simply accepted their inferior status and treatment at that time make them less oppressed? Why or why not?

Patriot or Loyalist?

As a conflict of values grows sharper, people are more compelled to choose sides. They may do this because they must finally choose one principle over another. Another factor may be self-interest – the choice of the side that offers the greatest possible personal benefits or the least personal harm.

On the next page are short biographies of four American colonists who might have lived between 1765 and 1775. Decide whether each one might have joined the patriots' cause, remained loyal to the British, stayed undecided, or gone either way. On a separate piece of paper, write each person's name, followed by the decision you think that person would have made. Then briefly explain the reasons for the person's choice. Be sure to consider both values and self-interest.

EXAMPLE: Ezra Stiles is a lawyer in Boston. Some of his clients include great merchants of that port like John Hancock. But he has also represented friends of the governor, notably Andrew Oliver (former stamp distributor).

EXAMPLE ANSWER: Stiles might stay undecided or go either way. He might go to the patriot's side because some of his clients are patriots (John Hancock) and they might put pressure on him. He might remain loyal because he needs the support of the governor and his friends.

1. James Farnham works in the British customshouse near the docks of Newport, Rhode Island. His job is to go aboard each ship docked in Newport and receive from its captain the list of the cargo he is carrying. Farnham then estimates the amount of tax on the cargo and adds on the wharf charges. When the captain or the merchant who is receiving the goods has paid all the duties and charges, Farnham issues him a bill of clearance signifying that everything has been paid up. Farnham is 52 years old and has held this job for 20 years.

Would Farnham be a patriot, stay undecided/go either way, or be a loyalist?

2. Salem Colburn is a fugitive slave living in Boston. In the 20 years since he ran away from his Virginia master, he has made his living wherever he could find work, mostly as a dockhand and ditchdigger. Colburn follows closely the writings of the patriots who have equated the evils of slavery and British rule but knows Southerners feel differently. He wonders if the revolution will bring freedom to slaves in the colonies.

Would Colburn be a patriot, stay undecided/go either way, or be a loyalist?

3. Carl Strasser came to Pennsylvania from Germany in 1752. A skilled ironworker, he soon became the owner of a forge. His business was good until 1767 when iron was put on the list of enumerated commodities. This means that he could not sell his iron to Europe (and especially to his contacts in Germany), but had to send it all to England to be processed. He had to shut down half his ironworks and ran the other half at a loss until he went bankrupt in 1770.

Would Strasser be a patriot, stay undecided/go either way, or be a loyalist?

4. Amanda Gray lives in Hingham, Massachusetts. Her husband is a farmer and member of the local militia. If there is a war, she knows she will be left to run the family farm herself. She also has four small children to take care of. Amanda's uncle is the collector of customs in Boston.

Would Gray be a patriot, stay undecided/go either way, or be a loyalist?

Persisting Questions of History

Examining the Central Issues of This Unit. You have read about the events leading up to the American Revolution, as well as many views of these events. You have spent considerable time discussing issues raised in these readings. For each of the central issues of this unit, write a brief summary of how the readings and discussions so far have contributed to your thinking on these questions:

- What is a proper government and where does its power originate?
- When should governmental authority be challenged?
- In what ways should people – as groups or individuals – be able to express themselves to constituted authority? Is violence ever the "right" course?

Assessing Your Discussion Skills. Throughout this unit, your class has been working on four discussion skills: being sensitive to others, stating issues, setting an agenda, and making clear transitions. Think about your own participation in discussions. Give yourself a rating on each of these skills:

1 = excellent

2 = very good

3 = good

4 = fair

5 = poor

You do not have to share your ratings with the class or your teacher. Use them to improve your discussion skills as you work on the rest of this unit.

The Account of Lt. Colonel Smith

In April 1775, the "shots heard 'round the world" were fired on the Green at Lexington, Massachusetts. Below are three descriptions of the events at Lexington. Each writer had a different point of view – the personal conditions that cause people to see and describe the same event differently. The first description is a report written by one of the British soldiers on April 22 – four days after the events unfolded.

* * * * * * * * * * *

SIR, – In obedience to your Excellency's commands, I marched on the evening of the 18th inst. with the corps of grenadiers and light infantry for Concord, to execute your Excellency's orders with respect to destroying all ammunition, artillery, tents, &c, collected there, which was effected, having knocked off the trunnions of three pieces of iron ordnance, some new guncarriages, a great number of carriage-wheels burnt, a considerable quantity of flour, some gun-powder and musquet-balls, with other small articles thrown into the river.

Not withstanding we marched with the utmost expedition and secrecy, we found the country had intelligence or strong suspicion of our coming, and fired many signal guns, and rung the alarm bells repeatedly; and were informed, when at Concord, that some cannon had been taken out of the town that day, that others, with some stores, had been carried three days before, which prevented our having an opportunity of destroying so much as might have been expected.

I think it proper to observe, that when I had gone some miles on the march from Boston, I detached six light infantry companies to march with all expedition to seize the two bridges on different roads beyond Concord. On these companies' arrival at Lexington, I understand, from the report of Major Pitcairn, who was with them, and from many officers, that they found on a green close to the road a body of the country people drawn up in military order, with arms and accoutrements, and, as appeared after, loaded; and that they had posted some men in a dwelling and Meeting-house.

From Henry Steele Commager, ed., Documents of American History, 9th ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1973).

Our troops advanced toward them, without any intention of injuring them, further than to inquire the reason of their being thus assembled, and, if not satisfactory, to have secured their arms; but they in confusion went off, principally to the left, only one of them died before he went off, and three or four more jumped over a wall and fired from behind it among the soldiers; on which the troops returned it, and killed several of them. They likewise fired on the soldiers from the Meeting and dwelling-houses....

Rather earlier than this, on the road, a countryman from behind a wall had snapped his piece at Lieutenants Adair and Sutherland, but it flashed and did not go off. After this we saw some in the woods, but marched on to Concord without anything further happening. While at Concord we saw vast numbers assembling in many parts; at one of the bridges they marched down, with a very considerable body, on the light infantry posted there. On their coming pretty near, one of our men fired on them, which they returned; on which an action ensued, and some few were killed and wounded. In this affair, it appears that, after the bridge was quitted, they scalped and otherwise ill-treated one or two of the men who were either killed or severely wounded....

On our leaving Concord to return to Boston, they began to fire on us from behind the walls, ditches, trees, &c., which, as we marched, increased to a very great degree, and continued without intermission of five minutes altogether, for, I believe, upwards of eighteen miles; so that I can't think but it must have been a preconcerted scheme in them, to attack the King's troops the first favorable opportunity that offered; otherwise, I think they could not, in so short a time from our marching out, have raised such a numerous body, and for so great a space of ground. Notwithstanding the enemy's numbers, they did not make one gallant attempt during so long an action, though our men were so very much fatigued, but kept under cover.

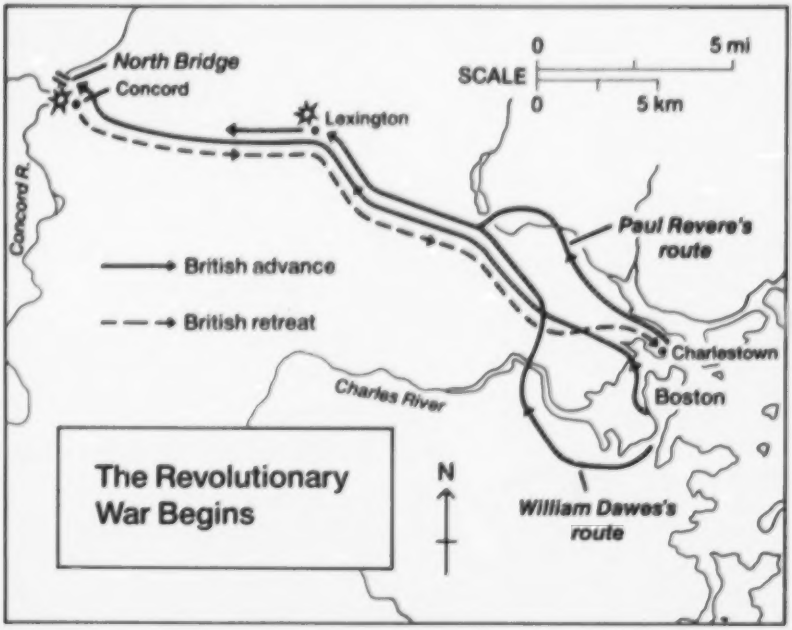
F. Smith, Lieutenant-Colonel 10th Foot.

Persisting Questions of History

Examining Motives. According to Lt. Col. Smith, why did the British soldiers march to Concord? What was their purpose? Was this action justified based on what you know about the colonists' activities?

Weighing Factual Claims. According to Lt. Col. Smith, who fired the first shot at Lexington? Did he observe the shots himself? Why might the British want to claim that the colonists fired the first shot?

Weighing a Value. Do you think it justifiable or unjustifiable for Lt. Col. Smith to protest that the patriots "did not make one gallant attempt" – did not act bravely in the approved military fashion of the time?



The Loyalist View

The next description of the events at Lexington was taken from a letter written by Ann Hulton, a loyalist, in April 1775. The exact date the letter was written is not known. As you read the letter, think about how Hulton's point of view is similar to and different from that of Lt. Col. Smith.

* * * * * * * * * * *

On the 18th instt at 11 at Night, about 800 Grenadiers & light Infantry [British troops] were ferry'd across the Bay to Cambridge, from whence they marchd to Concord, about 20 Miles. The Congress had been lately assembled at that place, & it was imagined that the General had intelligence of a Magazine [weapons warehouse] being formed there & that they were going to destroy it.

The People in the Country (who are all furnished with Arms & have what they call Minute Companys in every Town ready to march on any alarm), had a signal it's supposed by a light from one of the Steeples in town, Upon the Troops embarkg. The alarm spread thro' the Country, so that before daybreak the people in general were in Arms & on their March to Concord. About Daybreak a number of the People appeard before the Troops near Lexington. They were called to, to disperse, when they fired on the Troops & ran off, Upon which the Light Infantry pursued them & brought down about fifteen of them. The troops went on to Concord & executed the business they were sent on, & on their return found two or three of their people Lying in the Agonies of Death, scalp'd & their Noses & ears cut off & Eyes bored out. ...The Light Troops drove some parties from the hills, but all the road being inclosed with Stone Walls Served as a cover to the Rebels, from whence they fired on the Troops. ...In this manner were the Troops harrased in their return for Seven or eight Miles, they were almost exhausted & were releived by a Brigade of Tooops under the command of Lord Percy with two pieces of Artillery. The Troops now combated with fresh Ardour, & marched in their return with undaunted countenances, recieving Sheets of fire all the way for many Miles, yet having no visible Enemy to combat with, for they never woud face 'em in an open field, but always skulked & fired from behind Walls, & trees, & out of Windows of Houses, but this cost them dear for the Soldiers enterd those dwellings, & put all the Men to

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From Harold Murdock, ed., Letters of a Loyalist Lady ...1767-1776 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927). Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

death. ...Several officers are wounded & about 100 Soldiers. The killed amount to near 50, as to the Enemy we can have no exact acct [count] but it is said there was about ten time the Number of them engaged, & that near 1000 of 'em have fallen.

The Troops returned to Charlestown about Sunset after having some of 'em marched near fifty miles, & being engaged from Daybreak in Action, without respite, or refreshment, about ten in the Evening they were brought back to Boston. The next day the Country pourd down its Thousands, and at this time from the entrance of Boston Neck at Roxbury round by Cambridge to Charlestown is surrounded by at least 20,000 Men, who are raising batteries on three or four different Hills. We are now cut off from all communication with the Country & many people must soon perish with famine in this place. Some families have laid in store of Provissions against a Siege....

...at present a Solemn dead silence reigns in the Streets, numbers have packed up their effects, & quitted the Town, but the General has put a Stop to any more removing, & here remains in Town about 9000 Souls (besides the Servants of the crown) These are the greatest Security, the General declared that if a Gun is fired within the Town the inhabitants shall fall a Sacrifice. Amidst our distress & apprehension, I am rejoyced our British Hero was preserved. My Lord percy had a great many & miraculous escapes in the late Action. This amiable young nobleman with the Graces which attracts Admiration, possesses the virtues of the heart, & all those qualities that form the great Soldier—Vigilent, Active, temperate, humane, great Command of temper, fortitude in enduring hardships & fatigue, & Intrepidity in dangers. ...Indeed all the Officers & Soldiers behaved with the greatest bravery it is said....

Persisting Questions of History

Weighing Factual Claims. List several facts or explanations on which Hulton and Smith agree. List items on which Hulton provides more information than Smith. Would you accept Hulton's information and explanations? Why or why not?

Defining a Great Soldier. How does Ann Hulton describe a great soldier? Do you think she would call the colonial militiamen great soldiers? Why or why not?

The Patriot Preacher

You have read the views of a British soldier and a Loyalist. Now you will read the views of Jonas Clark, a minister in Lexington. Clark was an avid Patriot. The night before the battle, John Hancock and Sam Adams stayed in his home. The evening of the battle, Clark preached a fiery sermon against the British. Here is his account of the events of April 19.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Between the hours of twelve and one, on the morning of the nineteenth of April, we received intelligence...that a large body of the King's troops (supposed to be a brigade of about twelve or fifteen hundred) were embarked in boats from Boston, and gone over to land on Lechmere's Point (so called) in Cambridge. It was shrewdly suspected that they were ordered to seize and destroy the stores [military supplies] belonging to the colony, then deposited at Concord....

Upon this intelligence the militia of this town were alarmed and ordered to meet on the usual place of parade. This was not with any design of commencing hostilities upon the King's troops, but to consult what might be done for our own and the people's safety; and also be ready for whatever service providence might call us out to...

About the same time two persons were sent express to Cambridge, if possible to gain intelligence of the motions of the troops...

The militia met according to order, and waited the return of the messengers, that they might order their measures as occasion should require. Between three and four o'clock one of the expresses returned, informing that there was no appearance of the troops on the roads, either from Cambridge or Charlestown... Upon this, therefore, the militia company were dismissed for the present, but with orders to be within call of the drum, waiting the return of the other messenger, who was expected in about an hour... But he was prevented by their [British] silent and sudden arrival at the place where he was waiting for intelligence. So that, after all this precaution, we had no notice of their approach till the brigade was actually in the town... However, the commanding officer thought best to call the company together – not with any design of opposing so superior a force, much less of commencing hostilities, but

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From Jonas Clark, A Brief Narrative of the Principal Transactions of That Day (1776) Available from Pantheon Books.

only with a view to determine what to do, when and where to meet, and to dismiss and disperse.

Accordingly, about half an hour after four o'clock, alarm guns were fired, and the drums beat to arms, and the militia were collecting together. Some, to the number of about fifty or sixty or possibly more, were on the parade, others were coming towards it. In the meantime the troops...marched on till they came up to the east end of said meetinghouse, in sight of our militia (collecting as aforesaid), who were about twelve or thirteen rods distant. Immediately upon their appearing so suddenly, and so nigh, Captain Parker, who commanded the militia company, ordered the men to disperse, and take care of themselves, and not to fire.

Upon this our men dispersed...No sooner did they [British troops] come in sight of our company but one of them, supposed to be an officer of rank, was heard to say to the troops, "Damn them, we will have them!" Upon which the troops shouted aloud, huzza'd, and rushed furiously towards our men. About the same time, three officers (supposed to be Colonel Smith, Major Pitcairn, and another officer) advanced on horseback to the front of the body...

...The foremost, who was within a few yards of our men, brandishing his sword and then pointing towards them, with a loud voice said to the troops, "Fire! By God, fire!"—which was instantly followed by a discharge of arms from the said troops, succeeded by a very heavy and close fire upon our dispersing party, so long as any of them were within reach. Eight were left dead upon the ground! Ten were wounded...

Having thus vanquished the party in Lexington the troops marched on for Concord, to execute their orders in destroying the stores belonging to the colony deposited there. They met with no interruption in their march to Concord. But by some means or other the people of Concord had notice of their approach and designs, and were alarmed about break of day; and collecting as soon and as many as possible, improved the time they had before the troops came upon them to the best advantage, both for concealing and securing as many of the public stores as they could, and in preparing for defense...

In the meantime the British detachment marched into the center of the town. A party of about two hundred was ordered to take possession of North Bridge. Other parties were dispatched to various parts of the town in search of public stores, while the remainder were employed in

seizing and destroying whatever they could find in the townhouse and other places where stores had been lodged...

The provincials, who were in sight of the bridge, observing the troops attempting to take up the planks of said bridge, thought it necessary to dislodge them. They accordingly marched, but with express orders not to fire, unless first fired upon by the King's troops. Upon their approach towards the bridge, Captain Lawrie's party fired upon them, killed Captain Davis and another man dead upon the spot, and wounded several others. Upon this our militia rushed on, with a spirit becoming free-born Americans, returned the fire upon the enemy, killed two, wounded several, and drove them from the bridge...

The troops began a hasty retreat about the middle of the day, and were no sooner out of the town but they began to meet the effects of the just resentments of this injured people. The provincials fired upon them from various quarters, and pursued them (though without any military order) with a firmness and intrepidity beyond what could have been expected on the first onset, and in such a day of confusion and distress! The fire was returned for a time with great fury by the troops as they retreated, though (through divine goodness) with but little execution. This scene continued with but little intermission till they returned to Lexington, when it was evident that, having lost numbers in killed, wounded,

and prisoners that fell into our hands, they began to be not only fatigued but greatly disheartened. And it is supposed that they must have soon surrendered at discretion, had they not been reinforced. But Lord percy's arrival with another brigade of about a thousand men and two field pieces, about half a mile from Lexington Meetinghouse, towards Cambridge, gave them a seasonable respite.

...But no sooner were the King's troops in motion but our men renewed the pursuit with equal and even greater ardor and intrepidity than before. The firing on both sides continued with but little intermission to the close of the day, when the troops entered Charlestown, where the provincials could not follow them without exposing the worthy inhabitants of that truly patriotic town to their rage and revenge....

In the retreat of the King's troops from Concord to Lexington, they ravaged and plundered... But after they were joined by Percy's brigade, in Lexington, it seemed as if all the little remains of humanity had left them, and rage and revenge had taken the reins, and knew no bounds! Clothing, furniture, provisions, goods, plundered, broken, carried off, or destroyed! Buildings (especially dwelling houses) abused, defaced, battered, shattered, and almost ruined! And as if this had not been enough, numbers of them doomed to the flames!... Add to all this: the unarmed, the aged and infirm, who were unable to flee, are inhumanly stabbed and murdered in their habitations! Yes, even women in childbed, with their helpless babes in their arms, do not escape the horrid alternative of being either cruelly murdered in their beds, burnt in their habitations, or turned into the streets to perish with cold, nakedness, and distress!

Our loss, in several actions of that day, was forty-nine killed, thirty-four wounded, and five missing, who were taken prisoners, and have since been exchanged. The enemy's loss, according to the best accounts, in killed, wounded, and missing, about three hundred.

Persisting Questions of History

Weighing Factual Claims. List several issues of fact on which Clark disagreed with Smith or Hulton. Why do you think their descriptions of the events are so different? Do you think someone was deliberately lying or did both sides think they were telling the truth? Can you think of a time in your own life when people described an event differently? What accounted for the differences?

Comparing Points of View. These cases give very different descriptions of American patriots. Write down a number of these descriptive terms in the actual words of each case. What values does each writer hold that cause him/her to describe the patriots with these words? How would you describe the patriots?

Evaluating Explanations. Why did Clark say the militia gathered on the Green? Would you expect the British to realize that the militia was not gathered for violent purposes? Based on the events leading up to 1775, how would you have reacted if you had been a British soldier marching into Lexington?

Evaluating the Effects of Violence. Howard Fast wrote a famous novel about Lexington. In it, he said "Gun shooting is a declaration, not an argument. Nobody's going to be calm and reasonable about who shot first.... Now we're enemies until one side or the other wins its purpose." Do you agree that the violence at Lexington ended the possibility of solving the conflict peacefully? Was it inevitable that the two sides fight until one surrendered? Explain your answer.

Analyzing Arguments. Is it possible to get into an exciting or emotional argument without getting caught up in "winning"? To what extent is it possible simply to stop and say – "Let's find points of agreement and disagreement and not worry so much about 'winning'"? What is the price of "winning an argument" or "winning a war"? How does "surrender" or "losing" affect the person who experiences it?

Making Choices. Imagine you were a member of Jonas Clark's church. How would the events of April 18 and 19 have affected your views if you were undecided? a patriot? a loyalist?

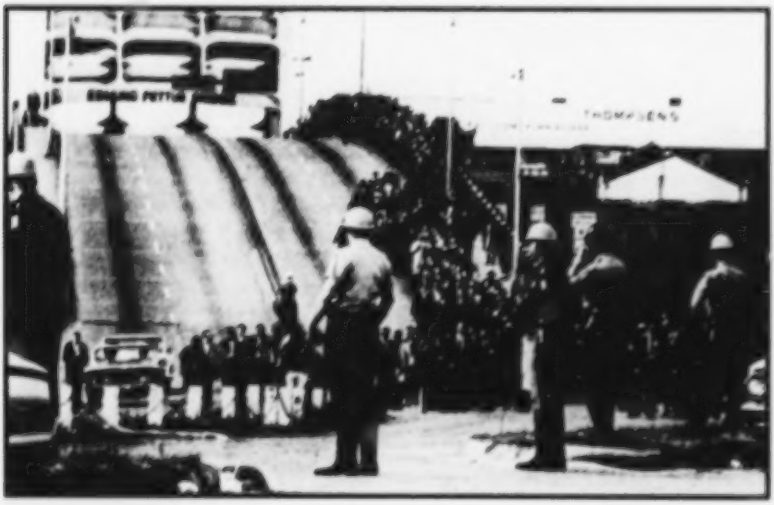
Incident at Pettus Bridge, March 1965

The colonists faced a decision in 1775 – how far to go in challenging established authority to gain what they thought was right. That question is still unanswered. The story below describes events that happened in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. As you read the story, look for similarities and differences between the civil rights demonstrators of 1965 and the colonial patriots of 1775.

* * * * * * * * * * *

A cold wind was blowing as the 525 marchers left their assembly point at Browns Chapel Methodist Church. They marched two by two, men and women, young and old, carrying an assortment of packs and paper sacks, bedrolls and blankets. They were aiming to hike more than 50 miles from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, in defiance of orders by Governor George C. Wallace. The Governor had forbidden the march as a threat to public peace and safety.

The black protest marchers went the six blocks to Broad Street without major incident. Then they turned toward Pettus Bridge, the start of a four-lane highway to the state's capital city. At the bridge approach they passed a cluster of men, armed but not in uniform. These were volunteer members of the posse organized by Dallas County Sheriff James G. Clark, Jr. The long line of marchers passed by quietly.



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Then, beyond the bridge, they saw the blue-uniformed state troopers, standing shoulder-to-shoulder across the full width of the highway. The troopers wore riot helmets, marked with Confederate flags. As the marchers moved forward, more slowly, the troopers pulled on gas masks and brought their nightsticks to ready position. Behind them stood more possemen, including a dozen on horseback. The marchers came on, edging to within 50 feet of the troopers' line.

"Halt."

The marchers stopped.

"This is Major John Cloud," said the voice coming over the portable amplifying system. "This is an unlawful assembly. Your march is not conducive to public safety. You are ordered to disperse and go back to your church or to your homes."

Hosea Williams, a civil rights leader, answered from the head of the marchers: "May we have a word with the major?"

"There is no word to be had."

The same words were exchanged twice more. Then the Major gave an ultimatum: "You have two minutes to turn around and go back to your church."

The marchers did not move. There was a tense moment of silence. "Troopers. Advance."

Suddenly, the line of troopers bent into a hurtling wedge of manpower. The marchers' front ranks toppled under the rush. Their packs and lunch baskets spilled across the highway. Those farther back broke into retreat, then huddled together as the mounted possemen charged them. Tear gas shells plopped into the crowd, covering the scene with a cloud of grey smoke. Most of the black marchers ran, coughing and crying. The possemen on the far side of the bridge fell in around them, harrying them on the wild return toward Browns Chapel Methodist Church. On Sylvan Street, where the church stands, some of the marchers held their ground again briefly. Sheriff Clark and a half dozen of his posse members were pelted with bricks and bottles as they tried to move marchers back into the church.

At this point Captain Wilson Baker, Selma's Commissioner of Public Safety, took a dangerous stand. He moved in between the two clashing groups, holding off Sheriff Clark and his men while he persuaded the marchers to go into the church.

More than 60 of the marchers were treated for injuries in an emergency infirmary set up in the parsonage next to the church. Seventeen were taken from there to hospitals. Their injuries ranged from severe cuts and bruises to fractured skulls.

For Selma's Commissioner of Public Safety, this day marked the violent failure of an arduous two-month task. Captain Baker's forces had been almost overwhelmed by the purposeful law-breaking of civil rights demonstrators. Yet he and his city police had been denounced by some local and state leaders for their "weak" tactics.

Early in January Dr. Martin Luther King had announced the selection of Selma as a "target city." Congress was awaiting a new bill proposing stronger federal enforcement of the rights of Americans to register and vote. Dr. King, head of the Southern Christian Leadership Council, said that he wanted to dramatize the voter registration issue by nonviolent methods.

Selma, many observers agreed, was a ripe target. Half of its 28,000 people were black. But fewer than 350 blacks were registered to vote. The County Board of Registrars was charged with taking undue time in processing the applications of blacks. The registrars were also accused of imposing very difficult reading and writing tests on black applicants, while white applicants had easier going.

"If Negroes could vote," Dr. King told one rally, "there would be no Jim Clarks. There would be no oppressive proverty directed against Negroes. Our children would not be crippled by segregated schools, and the whole community might live together in harmony.... The entire community will join in this protest and we will not relent until there is a change in the voting process and the establishment of a democracy."

The tactics of the campaign were well established. Large numbers of black applicants would put pressure on the Board of Registrars. If arrests began, the demonstrations would go on until the jails were filled and overflowing. The object was to keep the voting injustice before the eyes of Selma and the nation.

Captain Baker, however, was perfectly willing to make any and all arrests that were indicated by what he called "the letter of the law." His strategy, worked out in agreement with many, though not all, of Selma's chief officials, suggested that the law would not be stretched to stop demonstrations more quickly. The agreement also confined Sheriff Clark's area of operation to the county courthouse.

Selma's official city policy of calm law enforcement seemed to work effectively. On January 18 Dr. King registered as the first black guest ever to be admitted to the century-old Hotel Albert in Selma. An angry white man suddenly pushed up to the hotel desk and tried to strike the black leader. Captain Baker personally collared the attacker and dragged him to a waiting patrol car.

The first weeks of the campaign were conducted with a similar careful attention to Selma laws. Black marchers moved downtown to the courthouse in clusters of about 20 each. Thus they stayed within the bounds of a Selma law that prohibited parades without a permit. City police let the small groups pass without interference.

On February 1 Dr. King addressed 300 marchers gathered outside Browns Chapel Methodist Church. This time he instructed them to stay together. The file of marchers had gone three blocks when Captain Baker stopped them. "This is a deliberate attempt to violate the city's parade ordinance," he said. "You will have to break up into small groups."

Dr. King replied: "We don't feel that we're disobeying any law. We feel that we have a constitutional right to walk down to the courthouse."

The marchers moved ahead. They went two more blocks before Captain Baker intervened: "Each and every one of you is under arrest for parading without a permit."

More than 260 of the marchers, including Dr. King, went to jail. Most of them were released without bond to await trial later. Dr. King, however, declined to pay the $200 bond required of a nonresident. He began a five-day stay.

Meanwhile, more than 500 black students were skipping school to picket the courthouse. Sheriff Clark let them walk a few minutes in the cold drizzle. Then he reminded them of a law barring demonstrations

while a court was in session. He read an order from Circuit Judge James A. Hare, telling the pickets to disperse.

The students answered with a verse from a civil rights song. The sheriff then took 37 of the pickets and their leaders before Judge Hare. The judge fined them and gave them five-day jail sentences for contempt of court. Hundreds of other student demonstrators were taken to an emergency court, set up in an old armory. Most of them refused to sign identification slips. They chose instead to be taken to one of the penal camps established in the Selma area to take the jail overflow.

The arrests mounted day by day until they approached 3,000. The law seemed to be stretching more on both sides. Sheriff Clark arrested hundreds of students who broke from their line of march and ran through alleys toward the courthouse. He arrested hundreds more who stood outside the courthouse singing.

Sheriff Clark also arrested, as "demonstrators" 120 adults who were standing in line outside the courthouse in hopes of meeting with the Board of Registrars.

On February 5 Federal District Judge Daniel, H. Thomas ordered the Dallas County Board of Registrars to speed the registration of blacks and to relax the literacy tests. He threatened to appoint a federal referee if the board did not register all eligible persons by July.

On March 6 a group of 70 white Alabama citizens demonstrated in Selma for black rights. News reports called it the first all-white demonstration by Southerners for racial equality. Such incidents were certain to rankle state and county officials considered less moderate than the men who guided city police policy.

Then the civil rights demonstrators announced their intention of marching to Birmingham. Governor Wallace ordered state troopers to take "whatever measure are necessary" to stop the march. The confrontation at Pettus Bridge literally tore the thin lid of calmness off Selma.

On Tuesday, a civil rights worker, Rev. James Reeb of Boston, became the martyr of the Selma campaign. He and two other white ministers were attacked by four men. Mr. Reeb died of his injuries two days later.

The clash at Pettus Bridge led to sympathy marches in many cities. People from other parts of the nation – public officials, clergymen, nuns, teachers, scientists, celebrities, and others – were drawn toward Selma. Mr. Reeb's death crystallized the emotional pull still more.

On March 13 President Lyndon B. Johnson called the Selma events "a national tragedy." After a conference with Governor Wallace, the President announced that the federal government would not tolerate the further use of force against black demonstrators. He also promised that a sweeping voting rights bill would be sent at once to Congress.

On March 21, the Selma-Montgomery march began again, upheld this time by a federal court order and protected by a force of 4,000 U.S. soldiers and Alabama National Guardsmen put under federal orders.

The chain of events that had started at the Pettus Bridge ended before the Alabama State Capitol, with 25,000 people from throughout the nation on hand to support Martin Luther King's petition.

Persisting Questions of History

Analyzing Parallels. The questions of authority and dissent in Selma, Alabama, in 1965 and in the American colonies in 1765-1773 invite the making of comparisons and contrasts. Consider these questions in terms of the Selma case and of the Stamp Act case, pages 13-26:

- Suppose that a speaker said that the Rev. Martin Luther King was "the Sam Adams of his time." On what specific grounds would you agree or disagree with this comparison?
- Who, in your opinion, had the more serious grievances – the Stamp Act opponents of 1765 or the opponents of Selma's voter registration practices in 1965? Give specific reasons for your opinion.
- Did the Stamp Act opponents have greater opportunity or less opportunity than the Selma demonstrators to have complaints heard by established authorities? Give specific reasons for your opinion.
- Compare or contrast the methods of protest employed against the Stamp Act in the colonies and against voter registration practices in Selma. Were the 1765 methods of protest more effective or less effective than the 1965 methods

of protest? Were the 1765 methods of protest more easily justifiable or less easily justifiable as "right" than the 1965 methods of protest? Give specific reasons for your opinion.

Evaluating Violence. In 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1968 racial conflict in the United States grew. As with the events leading to the American Revolution, incidents of violence increased in number and mob action (riots) occurred. The federal government commissioned two studies on the problems of civil disorders and violence. The following is one conclusion of the official *History of Violence in America*:

> The evidence supports one basic principle: Force and violence can be successful techniques of social control and persuasion when they have extensive popular support. If they do not, their advocacy and use are ultimately self-destructive, either as techniques of government or of opposition. The historical and contemporary evidence of the United States suggests that popular support tends to sanction violence in support of the status quo: the use of public violence to maintain public order, the use of private violence to maintain popular conceptions of social order when government cannot or will not. If these assertions are true – and not much evidence contradicts them – the prolonged use of force or violence to advance the interests of any segmental, group may impede and quite possibly preclude reform. This conclusion should not be taken as an ethical judgment, despite its apparent correspondence with the "establishmentarian" viewpoint. It represents a fundamental trait of American and probably all mankind's character, one which is ignored by advocates of any political orientation at the risk of broken hopes, institutions, and lives.

- What is meant by "use of public violence." Give some examples.
- Did the patriots or the civil rights protestors have more popular support? According to the *History of Violence in America*, why is this important? Should the "rightness" of either cause be measured in terms of public support? Give specific grounds for your opinions.
- Does the conclusion of the report change your views on violence? Why or why not?

Challenging Authority: Methods and Motives

Today, as you are reading this book, people may be asking themselves whether they should challenge authority. They are considering the seriousness of the grievances they have and making decisions about whether and how to express themselves to authority.

Below are statements from several people who have decided to challenge authority. Each has a different method and/or motive, but all share a commitment to challenging authority.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Caedmon Fujimoto, high school student, San Francisco, CA

When I think about the nuclear issue or the bomb, I think of running for cover. I know the death toll will be high, but I have this instinct to try to survive. I think about it when I'm quiet and just sitting, like on the subway train coming to work – boy, I wouldn't want it to happen while I'm on the subway!

I've tried to do my part to prevent nuclear war. When I was in the sixth grade I passed out leaflets door to door for the People for Nuclear-Free Future. So far, I've tabled, leafleted, gone to demonstrations, collected proxies for the Freeze, and gone to rallies. I also worked on a City Council campaign, where the candidate was for the freeze.

The hardest thing for me to explain about the nuclear issue is the cost of the arms race and how it affects our economy. When I talk to conservative people I feel like I need to learn to talk about the economic consequences of the arms race more effectively. When I talk to my friends they listen, but they joke around a little about it.

When I was in the fourth grade my dad told me about Hiroshima. Because I'm half Japanese, my dad, I guess, felt like I should know about it – that they dropped the bomb on Japan and that there are lots of people still suffering from its effects. It was such a terrible thing.

Excerpted from Melinda Moore and Laurie Olsen, Our Future at Stake (Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1985). Reprinted by permission of New Society Publishers, 4527 Springfield Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19143.

I think putting pressure on Congress and the president are the most effective things we can do to stop the arms race. That and participate in massive protests across the country – then they will have to listen. I think voting is important, but I only wish everyone who was eligible would register, and everyone who was registered would vote. Then we might stop it.

Mark Winslow, pastor, Chicago, IL

I first resisted paying a portion of my owed income tax this past year. I filed my return with IRS and included a letter explaining that I am a born-again Christian who is conscientiously opposed to having any of my tax monies used for military spending.

Reliable figures are hard to come by, but as near as I could tell, 46 percent of the federal budget was going to military purposes. So on my return I claimed a "Military Spending Credit" of $163.30. (That was 46 percent of my owed tax.) I explained that I have had enough of trusting in the power of cruise missiles, Trident submarines, and hydrogen bombs. And I explained that I was sending a check for $163.30 to the Olive Branch mission on Chicago's skid row instead.

I guess it is my sense of powerlessness that has compelled me to make a small statement: a witness. Since I am single, I have enjoyed the luxury of coming to this decision alone. And since I own few material possessions, I have not had to worry about the IRS seizing my car, for example.

I'm not afraid of the courts or prison – although it's doubtful that IRS would bring it to that. (They very seldom do.) Soon, they will probably just take what they want out of my bank account. They will get their money, but I will have made a witness for peace.

I am not crusading for everyone to adopt my position. And I am not bothered if my small witness fails to change people's attitudes or even fails to help reverse the arms race, though I believe it could. What I was more afraid of was that I would remain silent before the greatest military build-up in history – and thereby find myself guilty before God.

From The Other Side magazine (Philadelphia, PA: The Other Side, 1980). Reprinted by permission of The Other Side, 300 West Apsley, Philadelphia, PA 19144.

Joseph Scheidler, director of Pro-Life Action League, Chicago, IL

This book is based on the equation that abortion equals murder. It will make sense only to those who believe without question that abortion is the unjust, premeditated taking of an innocent human life. *Closed: 99 Ways to Stop Abortion* is a collection of methods that can be used, and that have been used successfully, to stop abortions.

In America, a violent death from abortion takes place every 20 seconds. That is a total of 4,500 deaths every day, 1.7 million abortions each year. Slaughter of a nation's posterity will destroy that nation both physically and spiritually. America is being destroyed by the killing of its children before they are born.

Those who understand abortion and want to stop it have an obligation to recruit others into the pro-life movement and to pass on to them their experience and expertise so that, in time, the injustice of abortion will end. Pro-life activists cannot wait for the legislative and judicial process that will make abotion illegal. The activist has to save lives now....

No social movement in the history of this country has succeeded without activists taking to the streets. Activism, including demonstrations, pickets, protests, and sit-ins, is necessary not only to save lives but to garner public attention, bring the media into the struggle, and shake politicians into recognizing the determination of anti-abortion supporters. Anyone who misses this purpose of activism is a poor student of history....

Since the activities and methods proposed in this book are intended to interfere with and even stop the business of abortion, when you use them clinic personnel may file complaints against you or call the police and have you arrested. Cases resulting from these actions will often be dismissed. But they may also result in some form of penalty, fines, or supervision. If you have any questions about the legality or advisability of any of the methods of protest discussed in this book, we suggest that you consult a competent attorney before you engage in them. We do not intend to suggest or recommend any activities that the reader would consider immoral or unethical. Whatever you decide to do must conform to your rightly formed conscience.

From Closed: 99 Ways to Stop Abortion by Joseph Scheidler. Copyright © 1985. Published by Crossway Books, Westchester, IL, and Regnery Books, Chicago. Reprinted by permission of Crossway Books.

Denise DuBois, college student, Boulder, CO

I an an undergraduate math student at the University of Colorado in Boulder. I would like to teach math in a minority community, preferably in Denver where I grew up. I was bused to school in Denver as a result of the desegregation rulings of the 1960s. My mother is American and my father is Swiss. I hold dual citizenship in the United States and Switzerland.

My sympathy for oppressed peoples comes from my early childhood in Denver. I have always wanted to help them overcome oppression. South Africa's apartheid system is abhorrent to my belief system about the way people should be treated.

I spent 1987 in Geneva working as a secretary. Because French is not my first language, it took me a while to discover that the company I worked for did a lot of business with South Africa. I decided to quit working there once I realized this.

I am now engaged in a protest at the University of Colorado. I built a shantytown with many other students as a symbol of the conditions in South Africa, although in this rich community we cannot duplicate conditions exactly. We also built the town to demonstrate our solidarity with the black people of South Africa who are oppressed by apartheid. In shantytown, which we have occupied for three weeks thus far, we have had petitions on which we have nearly 4,000 signatures asking for the Regents of the University of Colorado to divest from South Africa. Divesting means taking the university's money out of companies with business interests in South Africa. We have started a postcard campaign, getting students to send postcards to members of the Board of Regents asking them to vote to divest from South Africa. At a recent meeting of the Regents we asked them to divest; we even had a speaker from South Africa. Regent Fowler walked out of the room while our guest was speaking. The Regents voted 7-1 to continue to invest in South Africa.

As I mentioned before, I have been arrested. I believe in using methods both legal and illegal to show my support of the anti-apartheid movement. I thoroughly support nonviolent civil disobedience. The nonviolence of protestors in this country is completely appropriate. We are not oppressed by the system of apartheid. I would not go so far as to tell the blacks in South Africa to practice nonviolence. They are the ones who are living in shantytowns and who are oppressed by this system.

Persisting Questions of History

Analyzing Analogy Cases. Pick one of the cases above and answer the following questions as they relate to that case. You may have to do some additional research to answer the questions fully.

1. What grievance does this person have with authority?

2. What values cause them to feel this way?

3. How much popular support is there for this person's position?

4. How has this person chosen to challenge authority? What method(s) of protest does he/she use?

5. Are these methods of protest appropriate? Are they effective? Use an analogy from the American Revolution to support your answer.

6. Find an example of another person who either supports or refutes this person's position.

Reflecting on the Central Issues of This Unit. Write a brief essay giving your views on the three central questions of this unit (see page 4). Use examples from the materials in this book, as well as other analogies you can think of to support your views.

Review, Reflection, and Research

The previous cases have taken you through steps in analyzing a persisting public issue. These culminating activities aim at deeper analysis and fuller discussion of broad views.

The Case of George Watkins/Who Should Govern?

Reviewing the case of George Watkins, you are likely to see that his values are mixed and difficult to hold intact in pre-Revolutionary conditions. Like most of us, he may have held these values without having to defend them or to prove their worth. But now his values are being put to the test by crisis.

You, like George Watkins, may find your values hard to sustain in debate or in time of stress, and hard to defend in the face of many challenges.

Taking the part of George Watkins, try to explain:

Why I Will Join the Patriot Cause
or
Why I Will Stay Loyal to the Crown

Write a carefully thought out "position paper." Your paper should include:

a. DEFINITIONS of key terms. **Example:** A student might write that, "The Colonists are fighting for their freedom. By freedom I mean being able to do as you please as long as you don't hurt anyone else."

b. FACTUAL EVIDENCE to back up general statements. **Example:** A student might write that, "The patriot cause seems to have little respect for property. Boston mobs protesting the Stamp Act burned and destroyed property long after they had made their point of frightening Crown officials."

c. WEIGHING of values. **Example:** A student might write that, "I think my property rights are important. But I think that representative government is more important for the colonies now. I believe that this sort of government will in the end uphold property rights better than an aristocratic government."

d. QUALIFICATION of general statements. **Example:** A student might write that, "Every person should have representation in government. By this I mean a voice in major decisions. I don't mean that everyone has to vote on every little question. For instance, a constable should not have to wait for a vote before he can arrest someone."

e. ANALOGIES for situations from other cases in this unit. **Example:** A student might write that, "I believe in the rule of law. I am like Captain Baker in this respect. He believed that the two sides should remain peaceful and obey the 'letter of the law'."

The Stamp Act

How wide was the range of opinion on the English-Colonial issues of 1765? The differences may be dramatized by a "hearing" before the class.

Students should be chosen to represent the witnesses – Lord George Grenville, Colonel Barre, Daniel Dulany, Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams, Governor Bernard, Andrew Oliver, John Adams, and an English merchant whose fortunes are just starting to rise. The witnesses should be prepared to make statements and answer questions.

The hearing will consider this question: *Do all the rights of Englishmen extend equally to the people of the American colonies?*

Apathy or Action?

In 1973, a group of political scientists met to discuss what happens when people become angry with the government. Here is the beginning of a news article about their meeting:

> So Americans are mad at their political system – alienated, to use a big, academic word. So what happens?
>
> Nothing drastic. They are likely to vote a little less often, because they do not think elections matter so much. Some withdraw from politics completely, others try new channels like picketing and demonstrating.

From William Chapman, "U.S. Voters Aloof as Trust in System Ebbs," The Washington Post (August 19, 1973).

Many abandon the two major parties, becoming independents or turning to a third party. A growing number, but still a mere handful, emigrate.

Nothing apocalyptic happens. There is no mass rejection of institutions like Congress or the Presidency. They do not grope for extreme solutions.

How is this different from the way the patriots reacted to their disillusionment with the British government? Which do you think is a better analogy for the way people today react when constituted authority acts in a way they think is inappropriate – 1773 or 1973? Discuss this question with your classmates.

Violence

Research another instance of violence (i.e., mob action) in U.S. history. Use what you learn through your research, as well as what you have studied about the Revolution and riots in the 1960s, to discuss the following questions:

What are the moral limits of mob action?

What dangers lurk in mob action? What controls a mob? Who organizes a mob, or is it largely unorganized?

When people join a mob, is it because they have made a decision to do so or for other reasons?

Is mob action effective or ineffective in achieving change?

Does violence put an end to discussion? Does it destroy efforts to reach a peaceful solution to a conflict? Why or why not?

Thinking About Thinking

As you worked on this unit, how well did you do at thinking about both the issue at hand and the way in which you were discussing the issue? Write a brief essay analyzing what you think you did well and where you could still improve.

To order this unit or for more information on the Public Issues Series, contact:

SSEC Publications
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Boulder, CO 80302

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AMERICAN REVOLUTION: CRISIS OF LAW AND CHANGE TEACHER'S GUIDE

Public Issues Series Social Science Education Consortium 1988

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The Public Issues Series

The *Public Issues Series* was originally conceived of by the Harvard Social Studies Project of the 1960s and 1970s. The major purpose of the series – both then and now – is to help students analyze and discuss persisting human dilemmas related to public issues. We would emphasize that the term *public issues* is not synonymous with *current events*. By public issues, we mean problems or value dilemmas persisting throughout history and across cultures. The situations of Christian martyrs in Rome, a bureaucrat in Nazi Germany, a slave in 19th-century America, or an Ethiopian refugee in Texas in 1988 all represent important public issues. We believe that most of the important current events can be clarified by reference to public issues in other places and other times. Thus, all the units in the series suggest parallels between historical illustrations of persisting human dilemmas and present issues in the United States and the world.

The units in the series use historical, fictional, and contemporary situations. They also assist students in using a structured approach to issues analysis and in developing the skills of reasoned discussion. The units are not designed to be followed mechanistically through every question. There is no critical sequence of exercises. Teachers should view the materials provided as possible strategies for developing discussion of public issues and should pick and choose among the materials according to their own goals. In making selections, teachers should note that students will need information from other sources to discuss some questions intelligently; this may be a factor in deciding whether to have students address those particular questions.

As classes work with the materials, it is important to give students a sense of progress by periodically summarizing where the case material and discussion have taken them, particularly in terms of their discussion skills and the central, or necessary, questions of the unit.

The Necessary Questions

This unit on the American Revolution focuses on the following organizing questions:

- What is a proper government and where does its power originate?

- When should authority be challenged?
- In what ways should people – as groups or individuals – be able to express themselves to constituted authority? Is violence ever the "right" course?

Primary source documents and secondary sources are used to acquaint students with how these questions manifested themselves in the period leading up to the American Revolution. Special attention is given to the choice individuals faced – whether to remain loyal to a government that violated the values for which he/she believed it stood or to support violent protest against that government.

Analogies are drawn between the issues of the Revolution and events in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. Students and teachers can choose among several contemporary cases for analysis and comparison. Of course, a number of other historical and contemporary examples can also be developed by the teacher – John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, the Pullman strike, the Vietnam War protests, Puerto Rican nationalists, and so on.

Analyzing the Issues

In addressing the necessary questions of the unit, students will grapple with ethical-value questions, definitional issues, and issues of fact-explanation. For example, the question relating to a "proper government" requires that students look at values or beliefs about government, which are the subject of one of the "Persisting Questions in History" sections of the unit. Addressing the second necessary question – When should authority be challenged? – requires students to define authority; this definitional issue is emphasized throughout the unit. In examining whether violence is ever justified, students will consider such criteria as the severity of the grievances being protested. In so doing, they will be called upon to judge factual circumstances.

As students work through these and other issues, they should be practicing the explicit stating of issues and use of analogy to clarify their positions, as illustrated in the following classroom discussion on "A Closer Look at the Stamp Act."

Student 1: I guess the colonists showed the British that they weren't going to buy a bunch of stamps just to carry on their normal business.

Student 2: Well, today we have to use postage stamps as well as stamps to register deeds and other legal documents. Should we run around burning down post offices? *(Uses modern analogy to challenge the implication that colonial protest against stamp tax was justified.)*

Student 1: That's different. The British were taxing Americans who had no representation in Parliament. But we have representation in Congress. *(Makes an important distinction between original case and modern analogy.)*

Student 2: I suppose high school students have the right to burn down the principal's house and boycott school because they are not represented in the decisions that affect them? *(Uses a second analogy to show that not all people in modern America have direct representation in important decisions.)*

Student 1: Again that's different. High school students are represented indirectly through their parents. *(Suggests a second important distinction: Although all individuals are not directly represented, their interests are represented.)*

Student 2: All right, I concede that the colonists' interests were not adequately represented in Parliament. But did that give them the right to protest with violent demonstrations? *(Explicit shifting of the issues to justification of violence, after clarifying the issue of representation or consent.)*

Student 1: Violence wasn't a major method of protest. The most effective part of the protest was the boycotting of businesses, which hurt English merchants.

Student 2: You're raising a factual issue: Was violence a *major* part of the protest – or was violence an *effective* part of the protest? But I want to discuss the value issue: Was the violence justified? *(Delineates issues and suggests agenda.)*

Student 1: What I'm saying is that violence is not justified because it is usually ineffective and poorly planned. *(Shows relationship of factual and value issues.)*

Teaching the Unit

Each Public Issues unit can be taught in a variety of ways. The following is one way of approaching *The American Revolution*. Activities that introduce skills with which your students are already familiar can simply be skipped and the skill briefly reviewed.

Note that this booklet is not intended to replace your usual unit on the American Revolution, but to enhance and expand upon it. If you normally cover the causes of the Revolution in some depth, the section "Seeds of Revolution" can be skipped or used as a quick review of the material you have already covered. You might then use "A Closer Look at the Stamp Act," "The Case of George Watkins," and "Difficult Choices" to encourage students to think more deeply about the decisions facing the colonists. The section "The War Begins" could be used to replace your usual lesson on Lexington and Concord. The exercises in "Review, Reflection, Research" can be used to evaluate student progress.

Preparing to Teach the Unit. Conduct a discussion about students' experiences with large- and small-group discussions. Where do the best conversations take place—slumber parties, locker rooms, the family dinner table? How do classroom discussions differ from the "best conversations" outside of class? How would students describe good conversations inside the classroom?

Have students brainstorm a list of the characteristics of a good discussion. Use the student-generated list to introduce these four characteristics of a disciplined discussion:

- Sensitivity to others (active listening, reflective listening, suspending judgment, clarifying)
- Stating issues (asking questions, brainstorming, categorizing, reframing)
- Setting an agenda (pursuing issues with continuity, pacing, evaluating relevance)
- Making clear transitions (making explicit changes in the issue, summarizing)

Divide the class into four small groups, assigning each group responsibility for one of these sets of characteristics. Tell students they will be responsible for teaching this skill to three other students and for coaching these students in this skill as the unit progresses. Give each group the worksheet on their skill and allow time for group discussion and practice.

Form new groups comprised of one student from each of the original four groups and allow time for sharing.

If you wish, you may use the double-entry learning log sheets in conjunction with the unit. A learning log is a simple technique for encouraging students to reflect on what they have read about and discussed in class. If you decide to use the logs, you will need to allow four to six minutes at the end of each class period for silent reflection and writing. The logs should not be graded, as that introduces an element of risk that defeats the purpose of keeping them.

The log activity can be a way of stimulating the making of connections between new information and what students already know. It can also help students develop the habit of reflecting on what they have learned, a good study habit, but something that students generally will not do on their own.

If you choose to use the logs, distribute them at this time and acquaint students with the ways in which they can use this tool:

- Making notes
- Recording personal responses (inferences, hypotheses, and generalizations)
- Reacting to the material presented
- Noting questions they want to have answered
- Recording their reservations and doubts about the information and conversation
- Reflecting on what they have learned through reading and conversation

Encourage students to make an entry in the log every day during the unit.

Introducing the Unit. Assign students to read pages 3-5 of the unit. Review with students the methods for supporting or challenging claims related to each type of issue.

Type of Issue	Strategies for Supporting/Challenging Claims
Ethical-value issues	Use of value-laden language Use of a respected source Prediction of a valued consequence Identification of a conflicting value Use of analogies
Definitional issues	Stipulation Use of a respected source
Fact-explanation issues	Reference to common knowledge Personal observation Use of a respected source Demonstration of consistency with other well-established claims

Encourage students to write their initial reactions to the central questions in their learning logs.

Setting the Stage. The "Seeds of Revolution" section provides a summary of events that led up to the Revolution. If you have covered these events through a text unit, you may skip this section or use it as a brief review. If these events are not familiar to students, you may wish to spend additional time on this section. The "Persisting Questions of History" section concluding this segment provides an opportunity for students to practice classifying issues and begins the process of defining authority, a key step in answering the central questions of the unit. It may be helpful in discussing the definition of authority to review with students the colonists' experiences with self-government. Have students discuss these issues in their four-person groups; have groups pause periodically to give each other feedback on the discussion skills they have been assigned and to assess the progress of their discussion.

Focus on the issue of dissent, looking at possible methods. To make the issue more meaningful to students, ask: Under what conditions would students be justified in deliberately breaking school rules to bring about reform? Actual incidents, such as cafeteria boycotts or dress code protests, may be discussed. Students can list policies they consider unfair and suggest appropriate means of dis-

sent for each. They might also examine policies they believe are fair and analyze how they came about.

Assign students to read "A Closer Look at the Stamp Act." Because of the length of this reading, "Questions for Conversation" are inserted at three points throughout the article. Encourage students to practice their discussion skills in their small groups as they examine these questions. Note that one of the questions on pages 23-24 deals with boycotts, mentioning the Montgomery bus boycott, the California grape boycott, and the baby formula boycott. You may need to explain these three boycotts or allow time for research if students are unfamiliar with the boycotts and the issues they addressed.

The "Persisting Questions of History" focus on methods of protest, the definition of authority, and mob action. You may wish to expand on the issue of mob action by examining whether people engage in violence only because of reasoned commitment to causes. Do they become involved accidentally? Do they become involved to satisfy emotional drives, to satisfy the desire for self-survival, or to make financial gain? By examining the actions covered in the case study, students can develop various explanations for the outbreak of violence. Insights from psychology and sociology could be introduced here if a psychologist from the school or community is available to talk about the topic of violence. Students might write creative stories in which groups are allegedly fighting for higher principles but, in fact, have little commitment to the "cause." Students might also write general guidelines for the use of violence or intimidation when protesting. Under what general circumstances are such methods justified?

Another possible activity is to have students practice taking the British and colonial perspectives and suggesting actions that might have prevented the escalation of the crisis.

To set the stage for "The Case of George Watkins," ask: What questions do you think a person would need to have answered before he/she joined a protest against the government? Post student responses on the chalkboard. Instruct students to see whether George Watkins looked for answers to similar questions as they read pages 26-32. They might also list arguments made by Dr. Johnson and the sailor in their learning logs and then list the reactions that a man of Watkins' experience and position might have had.

Assign students to read the case study, or stage a dramatization of the three scenes—the conversation between Watkins and Johnson, the set-to at the bar, and the meeting at Lincoln. The following questions could be used following the three scenes to check for understanding:

- How would you describe George Watkins? What arguments about government does Johnson make for remaining loyal to Great Britain? How does he think change should happen? Why would he resist the leadership of Adams and Hancock?
- What type of government is the tipsy sailor proposing? Do you think he has a clear view of "good government"? What would explain why some men in the bar remained silent during this discussion?
- To what values did Sam Adams appeal? To what values did James Cartwright appeal? What dangers lurked in the anger of the crowd? Would you call this crowd a mob? Why or why not?

Allow time for students to complete the classifying and identification of values related to a proper government called for in the "Persisting Questions of History." Note that in discussing the question of whether George Watkins should remain loyal or join the rebels, students will have difficulty resolving the factual issues of whether the patriots used peaceful means of protest sufficiently. It becomes necessary at some point to stipulate historical facts and focus the discussion on conditions under which either the Tory or Patriot position was more just or more consistent with Watkins' self-interest. If it is stipulated, for example, that the British could not have been persuaded to change by peaceful means, then one may still ask if American grievances were serious enough to warrant violence.

One technique for insuring careful attention to statements made in discussion is to have a group of students deliberate, discuss, and decide "what to say next" to a previous statement created by another team or group. After team "A" comes up with its "best" statement, it is tape-recorded and played to team "B." Team "B" is given time to deliberate about how to respond. It then creates and records the response that is played to "A." When the discussion is over, the tape recording can be analyzed in terms of whether students listened and responded to each other, stayed on the subject, and made clear transitions from issue to issue. Individual students can be responsible for evaluating the taped discussion as to how well it reflected use of their "specialty" skills.

Difficult Choices. The readings in this section introduce the idea that other things besides values about government influenced decisions about which side to support in the conflict between the colonists and the British. You may find the following background information helpful in discussing the issues raised with students.

According to historian Mary Beth Norton, only about one-fifth of the colonists remained loyal to the British government. She finds this surprising, because to do otherwise meant a shift in thinking. Norton describes those who remained loyal as "British-appointed government officials, merchants whose trade depended on imperial connections, Anglican clergy everywhere and lay Anglicans in the North, since the king was the head of the church, former officers and enlisted men from the British Army, many of whom had settled in America after 1763, non-English ethnic minorities, especially Scots, tenant farmers, particularly those whose landlords sided with the patriots, members of persecuted religious sects, and many backcountry southerners who had rebelled against eastern rule in the 1760s and 1770s."

Active patriots, according to Norton, made up two-fifths of the population and came from the following groups: "Yeoman farmers, members of dominant Protestant sects (both Old and New Lights), Chesapeake gentry, merchants dealing mainly in American commodities, city artisans, elected officeholders, and people of English descent. Wives usually but not always adopted their husband's political beliefs." Many forms of protest or social reform were pursued by different people; not all supported or participated in armed rebellion.

Two-fifths of the white population remained neutral, some because they were pacifists like the Quakers, others because they wanted to get on with their lives and not be bothered. This neutral two-fifths tended to resist attempts by either the British or the rebels to give money or men. Many were backcountry Scotch-Irish settlers.

American patriots had little tolerance for neutrality and considered those who were not for them to be against them. The patriots tried to arrest and harrass loyalists and neutrals and often banished them and confiscated their property. Norton says 100,000 Americans moved to Canada rather than live under non-British rule.

Most of the blacks who fought on the American side early in the war were free. Enslaved blacks fared better in the British military. Slave conspiracies and uprisings were a concern to the Americans, since the end result was pro-British. Large black populations in colonies like Georgia and South Carolina meant the white colonists were not as enthusiastic about resistance as their northern brethren. The British offered to free black slaves who would join their forces. Americans used this to their advantage in slave states by raising fears of slave rebellion as a reason for joining the revolutionary cause.

Assign one or two readings to each small group. Because of the language and spellings used, students may find reading and interpreting some of the source material difficult. If you expect this to be a problem, you may wish to read the materials aloud with the class. In any case, you should circulate around the room, answering questions and providing clarification as needed. Encourage students to focus on identifying the motives each person had for his/her decision. Also encourage discussion of the inconsistencies that women and blacks found in the attitude of the patriots toward their groups.

The "Patriot or Loyalist" exercise can be used in a variety of ways – as an individual written exercise; a small-group discussion exercise, in which each group discusses all or a limited number of the cases; or as a large-group activity. Since this activity can serve as a tool for evaluating students' progress in analyzing issues, it might also be used to assess discussion skills.

The "Persisting Questions of History" at the end of this section are designed to help students reflect on what they have learned about the central issues of the unit and how they are doing in applying the discussion skills introduced at the beginning of the unit. Answers to the first question, which involves the three central questions of the unit, can be used as an evaluation tool, both to assess student learning and to direct effort toward areas in which students seem to be having difficulty. Do not ask students to share their self-assessments, but do encourage them to think seriously about their own use of the discussion skills. If students are using the double-entry learning logs, the self-assessments can be entered in the logs.

The War Begins. Ask students if they can recall an event in their own lives in which different people remembered the event very differently. How did they account for those differences?

Many times, differences in descriptions of events reflect different points of view – the personal conditions that affect the way people gather and process information. Students will now be reading three descriptions of the events that are often said to have marked the beginning of the actual war – the firing of shots at Lexington and Concord. Each description is written from a different point of view – patriot, loyalist, and British soldier.

Assign the three readings in sequence and allow time for students to discuss the "Persisting Questions of History" in their small groups. The questions focus on the weighing of factual claims made by the three observers, as well as on how their points of view affected their conclusions. You may wish to allow some additional time to discuss the fourth question after "The Patriot Preacher," which deals with the effects of violence on discourse.

An alternative approach to presenting the final discussion is to divide the class into several groups

and assign each the role of a parishioner in Jonas Clark's church. One group might represent a loyalist, one a patriot, and two might represent undecided colonists; the background information in the preceding section and the role descriptions under "Patriot or Loyalist?" could be used to develop roles. Assign a dramatic student to read Clark's description aloud, embellishing it if he/she wishes with additional invectives against the British (this description of the events actually followed a 32-page sermon on the evils of the British). After the presentation, have each group discuss how the events and the sermon would have affected them. What would they be thinking as they left the church? To whom would they talk? Who would they avoid? Would they be reconsidering their position or choosing a position (if undecided)? Allow time for the groups to discuss these questions, decide what position they would take, and develop a rationale for that position. Each group should then choose one member to participate in a discussion with representatives from the other groups. Have the discussants sit in the center of the class, while the other students sit in a circle around them. At the end of the discussion, ask students to evaluate the experience.

Today's Issues: Analogy Cases. Introduce or review how analogies can be used in discussing public issues. Basically, by looking at similarities and differences between two situations, we can clarify and/or justify our positions on the original issue. Ask students if they can think of any situations from their study of U.S. history that might be analogous to the American Revolution – instances in which citizens challenged the actions of constituted authority. Did any of the examples involve violence, especially mob action or armed revolt?

Tell students that they are going to examine two analogies in some detail. The first is from the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Assign students to read "Incident at Pettus Bridge" and discuss the "Persisting Questions of History" in their small groups.

As a follow-up assignment, you might present students with the following excerpts from editorials published in Southern newspapers in March 1965. Have them rewrite these editorial statements, substituting names as necessary, so they appear to be comments on events in the American colonies in 1765. Is this interchange of terms reasonable? Why or why not?

> The march has little to do with the registration of Negro voters in Alabama. It is a propaganda spectacular, and it has within it the seeds of real violence. – Columbia S.C. State.
>
> ...If Negroes are to be led to a decision not to march, then the state of Alabama must do more...to convince Negroes...that this state will fully defend and sincerely will advance their just cause of the vote for all qualified. – Birmingham News.
>
> Alabama police have acted shamefully in their brutal tactics against Negro demonstrators. But the Negroes themselves, in search of national publicity at any cost, haven't helped by provoking an already bad situation... There is an urgent need for all parties to back up and pursue a more reasonable course. – Savannah (Ga.) Morning News.

Divide the class into five groups. Assign each group one of the contemporary analogies under "Methods and Motives." Tell students to read the account assigned to their group, do some initial discussion, and assign tasks for researching the issue further. Students will likely need several days (out of class) to conduct the research and an additional day to discuss the case in their group. On the final day, have each group present its case to the class for discussion. In making their presentations, you might also ask each group to reflect briefly on the group process aspects of this assignment – did they use the analysis and discussion skills they have been learning in the unit, how well did they divide the research tasks, did everyone in the group contribute to the research and discussion, etc.

Review, Reflection, and Research. These exercises include writing, research, and discussion. You may assign them selectively for completion by individual students or small groups, or they can be used as topics for large-group discussion and reflection on the unit.

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Student Name _____

SENSITIVITY

Conversations often seem to go around in circles because the participants don't seem to be talking about the same issue, even though they are on the same general topic or problem. They may, in fact, be listening to one another, but this would be hard to guess from what they say, for they do not respond to one another's statements. When this happens, people are not being sensitive to one another.

Being sensitive usually involves making a conscious effort to connect the speakers with the issues being expressed.

Some tips that may help you make that effort are:

- Put yourself in the other person's place to understand what that person is saying and how or he or she feels.
- Show understanding and acceptance through such nonverbal behaviors as gestures, eye contact, posture, and facial expression.
- While someone is speaking, listen actively to what he/she is saying. Avoid mentally planning your own response as the person talks. This keeps you from listening carefully.
- When a person has finished speaking, try restating the person's most important thought or feeling.
- If there seems to be confusion about the issue under discussion, clarify by summarizing the statements of several of the people who have spoken. This is helpful to the next person to enter the conversation because he or she can identify how to move the discussion forward based on this summary.

Assignments:

1. With your group, make up two discussions -- one that shows a high degree of sensitivity and one that shows little sensitivity. See if the class agrees with your judgment.

2. For the next several days, investigate different situations in which people have discussions. You might listen, for example, to people in the classroom, conversations in the cafeteria or at dinner in your home, conversations at a fast-food restaurant, or meetings to discuss school activities. Tape record some of these discussions. Then listen carefully to these recordings and evaluate how sensitive people are to one another in different discussions.

Student Name _____

STATING THE ISSUE

An argument usually begins when people have different points of view regarding the rightness or wrongness, legality or illegality, the justice or injustice, the truth or falsity of a situation – or of a person's behavior in a situation.

Discussion often begins by concentrating on one aspect of a concrete situation. In a complicated situation, many different opinions are soon thrown into the discussion. One of the first challenges of disciplined discussion is to sort out how many different things are being said about how many different issues or topics. Another immediate need is to identify points of agreement and disagreement. These steps allow the participants to focus on a limited number of issues and pursue them systematically. It also makes it much easier to be sensitive to other people's statements, since the participants are discussing one issue at a time.

To state issues clearly, it is useful to translate the main positions, or opinions that people have, into questions. Stating the issue in question form focuses the discussion on a specific topic that requires reasoning and justification.

Sometimes it is necessary to step outside of the give-and-take of the argument and try to summarize the nature of the issue over which you are disagreeing. One advantage of this kind of skill is that it provides focus and direction for the discussion. A second major advantage of stating issues explicitly is that it tends to broaden the discussion and show how a number of similar situations can be related, compared, and contrasted.

Assignment:

Write several brief dialogues. See if others in the class can identify the issues you intended to be the focus of the dialogues.

Student Name _____

SETTING AN AGENDA

An agenda is a list of issues that a group agrees to consider in the course of a discussion. When a group begins discussing a complicated situation, different people see different issues. Each usually talks about the issue he or she thinks is most important and is insensitive to the issues that others see. One way of dealing with this problem is to list all the issues that seem important. The participants in the discussion then decide which issues they wish to discuss and in what order.

Having made this decision, members of the group can remind one another of what points are relevant and what points are not. If someone jumps to the third issue when the group is still entangled in the first, he or she can be reminded that his or her contribution is not relevant at this point.

Pursuing issues with continuity is important. Changing issues too quickly tends to disrupt attempts to clarify or resolve basic disagreements. The systematic pursuit of an issue means sticking with it long enough to deal with its problems thoroughly, making sure that all members of a discussion group know where each one stands.

Assignment:

1. Pick a topic that is an issue in your community. With your group, brainstorm a list of issues that might be important to various individuals or groups. Draw up an agenda for a discussion that you might have regarding this topic. Share the agenda with classmates to see if they suggest any additional issues.

2. Listen to conversations about the topic your group selected. You might find such conversations in restaurants, on the bus, at the dinner table, or in a class. Evaluate whether the group discussing the issue set an agenda – identifying the issues to be discussed and pursuing those issues with continuity. Do the groups make much progress in understanding the topic as they discuss it? Why or why not?

Student Name _____

MAKING CLEAR TRANSITIONS

There are points in discussion where it is useful to leave one issue and move on to another. This may happen before or after an issue has been fully clarified. An argument between two discussants may become so deadlocked that no agreement is likely. They may then agree to disagree and to take up another issue related to the general topic. Or one member of the group may see that there is a prior issue that must be settled before the issue under discussion can productively be explored.

When someone chooses to change the issue under consideration, he or she should make this known with an explicit transitional statement, explaining why a change of issue at that point would move the discussion forward.

When making a transition, it may be helpful to summarize the differences between the two discussants before moving on to the next issue.

Assignment:

Write an example dialogue that shows a deadlocked argument on an issue in your community. Exchange dialogues with another member of your group and write summaries and transitional statements for each other's dialogues.

Student Name _____

DOUBLE-ENTRY LEARNING LOG

Topic: _____ Date: _____

Your Thoughts on the Facts/Issues	Facts/Issues